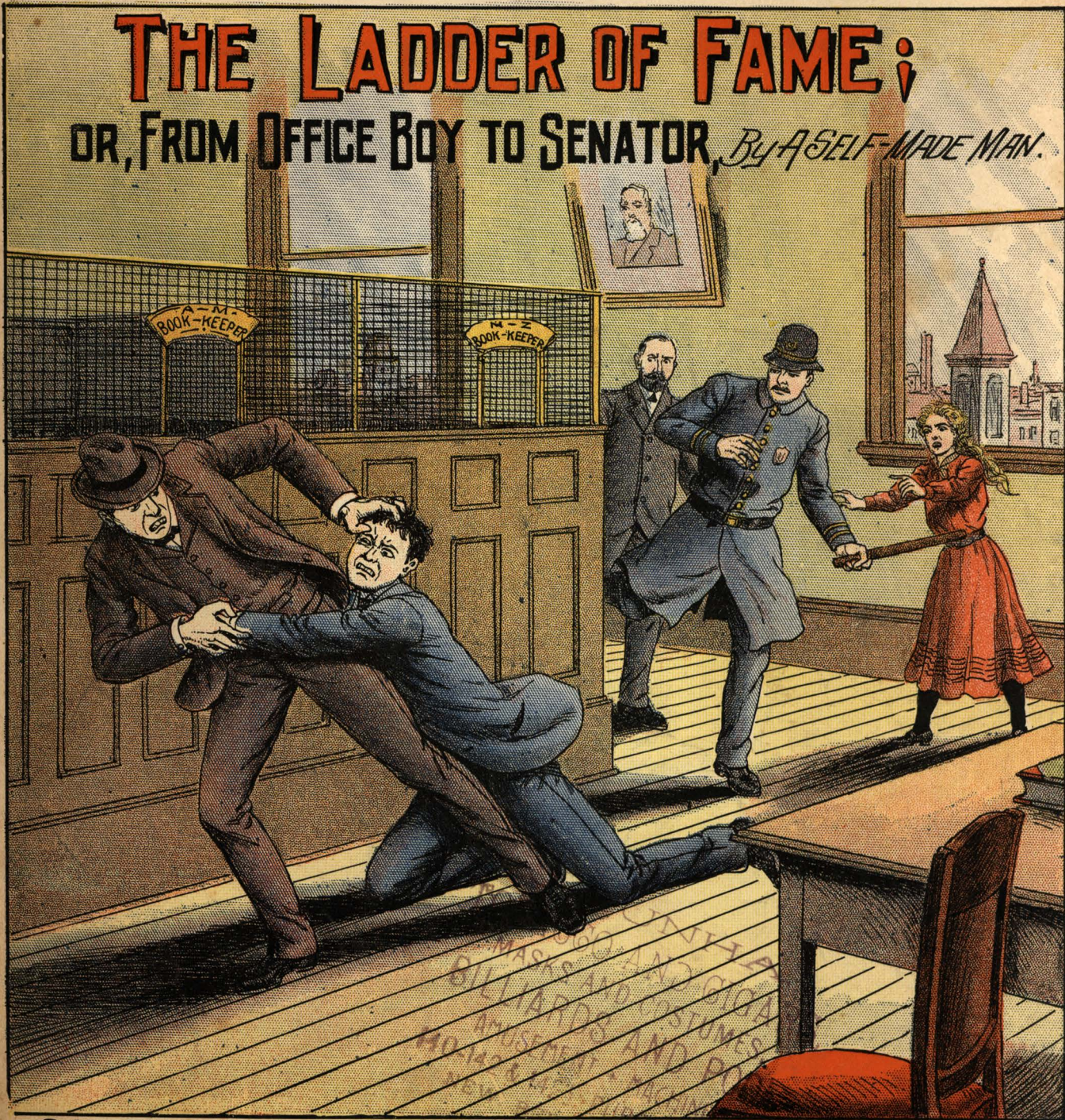


FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

THE LADDER OF FAME; OR, FROM OFFICE BOY TO SENATOR, *BY A SELF-MADE MAN.*



Redmond, white with fury, struck the boy a heavy blow in the face, knocking him down, and attempted a dash for the door. Stanton, however, recovered himself in time to grasp the rascal around the waist, and a desperate struggle ensued.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1908, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

No. 50.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 14, 1906.

Price 5 Cents.

THE LADDER OF FAME

OR,

FROM OFFICE BOY TO SENATOR

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

A DIRTY NIGHT ON THE WATER.

"It's an awful night to go upon the water, George," said Mrs. Stanton, as she glanced at the windows, the loose sashes of which were beating a tattoo against the frame.

"I know it is a bad night, mother," replied her stalwart, good-looking son, whose age was probably seventeen; "but I've been afloat in many a worse one."

"Your poor father lost his life in just such a blow while going down the harbor to his vessel," said the little widow, wiping a tear from her eye; "and he was more at home on the water than you."

"You forget, mother, there was a fog on the bay the night father was lost, and he was run down by a steamer."

"I don't like to have you go," she protested, with all a mother's solicitude for her only child. "What should I do if anything happened to you?"

"Don't be afraid. Nothing will happen to me. I know the bay like a book, and the Gull is a stiff, weatherly boat."

Mrs. Stanton shook her head as if she was not convinced.

"But we need the money, mother," went on her son. "We need it very badly. The gentleman has offered me ten dollars to carry him over to the island and back again. Remember his brother is dying and may not live until morning. There seems to be no other way for him to

reach the island except I take him in my boat. He told me that he hasn't seen his brother since they were boys together, and that was a long time ago. In fact, he hasn't heard from him in many years. His brother is the black sheep of the family, who ran away to sea. For some years he's been keeper of the Coffin Island Light, but he never communicated with his family until he was taken ill, and being told he could not live more than a day or two he had a dispatch sent to his only brother, the gentleman who is in the sitting-room below, asking him to come at once to the lighthouse on Coffin Island if he wished to see him before he died. The gentleman arrived at the inn in the village half an hour ago and inquired for an experienced boatman to take him over to the island. Mr. Bates sent him to me. That's about the whole story."

"Well, my son, I suppose under these exceptional circumstances I must let you go," said Mrs. Stanton, with another fearful look at the shaking windows. "But you will be very careful, won't you? Remember I shall not sleep a wink until you come back."

"Don't be so foolish, mother," remonstrated the boy. "It is not likely we will return to-night. The gale will have probably blown itself out by morning, and then when you see the sun shining on the glistening waters you will laugh at your present fears. Just think what a windfall ten dollars will be to us!"

"Be sure and dress yourself warm before you go, George."

"Yes, mother," and the robust, bronzed-featured lad

hurried downstairs to tell his caller that his mother had consented to his daring the dangers of Boston Bay in order to land him on Coffin Island that night.

"Now, sir, I will be ready to go in a very few minutes," said George Stanton.

"I am glad to hear it," replied the visitor, who was a fine-looking man of about forty-five, and who said his name was Howard Deering.

Leaving the stranger once more alone in the cosy little sitting-room of the humble cottage owned and occupied by Mrs. Stanton and her son, George hastened to his room to put on his sea rig, and after a very short interval returned to the room, after kissing his mother good-by, with an oilcloth coat under his arm and a fisherman's hat in his hand.

"All ready, sir," he said.

Mr. Deering rose from the rocker and followed the sturdy boy out into the inclement night.

The cottage was on the outskirts of Shoreham Village, a thriving little place situated upon one of the arms of the sea connected with Boston Bay.

It was surrounded by about an acre of land, which produced vegetables and fruit in their season sufficient for the needs of mother and son, with a small percentage to spare which George traded for other needful things at the village stores.

The waters of the bay laved the shore within a hundred feet of the back gate, and there, moored securely to a small landing stage, lay the stout catboat Gull.

During the summer George, besides taking care of the ground about the house, contrived to earn a few dollars doing odd jobs about the village and by taking the summer boarders in that locality, whose tastes inclined in that direction, out sailing or fishing in the Gull.

He was a skilful boatman and was thoroughly proficient in the science of nautical cooking.

His chowders, fries and battered clams were so good as to draw a good deal of custom in his direction; indeed, many city people went out with him on trips to nearby islands as much for the lunch he provided them with as for the sail itself.

Although George Stanton was a good son, and loved his mother very dearly, he was not satisfied with his life at the village and on the bay, nor with the proceeds of his labors.

He was ambitious and progressive in his views, and he longed for a wider field of action, where his talents would have a better chance to display themselves.

Yet on account of his widowed mother, who could not be induced to quit Shoreham, he stifled his eager anticipations of a more energetic life, contenting himself after a fashion with the reflection that he was still young, and that things would come his way in course of time.

As he and Mr. Deering walked down to the landing-stage they both realized that it was an awful night to go upon the water; but the boy had weathered some heavy gales on the bay before, and he was satisfied he could keep

the Gull right side up in anything save perhaps an out-and-out hurricane.

It was a pretty dark night, the wind rushed in from the big bay outside at a forty-mile clip, and the waves it kicked up along shore could be seen dashing their white, yeasty heads upon the hard sand with a measured roar that sounded anything but comforting to the ears of the fishermen's wives whose husbands and sons were out at sea that night.

Mr. Deering, with a pardonable nervousness, questioned the young skipper of the Gull in regard to the boat in which they were to venture upon the stormy bay and the dangers they would encounter on their trip to Coffin Island.

George's replies were so satisfactory that the gentleman felt his courage rise to the occasion, though he never would have undertaken the watery passage but for the serious errand he was engaged upon.

"You seem to be a thoroughly proficient boatman, young as you are," said Mr. Deering. "Indeed, Mr. Bates, the proprietor of the inn, assured me that you were well posted in the peculiar seamanship necessary for the safe management of a sailboat, and that you knew every shoal and rock in the bay."

"Well, sir, I think he didn't tell you any more than the truth," replied George, modestly.

"I consider myself very fortunate in having met you, then," answered Mr. Deering. "I should never forgive myself if I did not make a special effort to reach my brother's bedside before he breathed his last. I pray heaven we may arrive at the island in good time. If you put me through all right, my young friend, I will not only double my original offer, but be much obliged to you besides."

"I'll do the best I can, sir," replied George, delighted at the prospect of getting \$20 for his services; "but you can see that it blows pretty heavy, and there is an ugly sea running. However, the Gull is as stiff as oak and iron can make her, and she works like a lady in a sea. Now, sir, if you will step aboard, we'll put off at once."

Mr. Deering showed that he was not much used to boats and salt water by the gingerly way he essayed to step into the cock-pit of the sailboat as she rose and then fell away under the action of the heaving waves.

George saw that he was likely to lose his balance if he stepped down at the wrong moment, so he took him by the arm and assisted him in.

"Thank you, my lad. I'm rather a novice at this business," said Mr. Deering with a smile.

The young skipper pulled aside the sliding door to the cuddy and invited his passenger to enter and thus protect himself from the cold wind and dashing spray.

The gentleman was very glad to do so.

He found the little cabin was large enough to contain two berths and other conveniences, and that it was as clean and neat as a new pin.

George left him to get the boat under way.

He first put a couple of reefs in the mainsail and then hoisted it.

Having made fast the sheets, he cast off from the wharf, and the Gull darted off seaward like a frightened bird skimming the surface of the water.

At the very start she caught a heavy flaw and heeled over till her washboard was nearly submerged.

"Don't be alarmed, sir," said the boy, seeing the startled face of his passenger appear at the half-open entrance to the cuddy. "There's no danger."

"I was afraid we were going to capsize," replied Mr. Deering, whose nerves were somewhat shaken by the heeling over of the boat.

"No, sir. That was an unexpected slant of wind, that's all. I eased her at once and she came up like a duck. The Gull is good for a bigger blow than this. You see she jumps the waves like a feather. You'd better lie down, sir; you'll be more comfortable."

Mr. Deering thought the young skipper's advice good, and he retired out of sight.

George, enveloped in his oilskins, with his sou'-wester pulled well down over his eyes, sat on the weather side of the tiller peering forward into the night.

The boat breasted the big waves like a mass of solid oak, and, though the spray dashed furiously over her, as she leaped over the angry billows, George Stanton felt as safe in her as he would in the kitchen of his mother's cottage.

The wind was east and the sky overcast, which made the night exceedingly gloomy and dark.

The intrepid young boatman could only make out the somber outlines of the islands and the headlands of the main shore; but these were sufficient to enable him to lay his course.

The roaring of the wind, the surging of the waves and the thumping of the boat against the choppy sea were the only sounds to be heard.

On flew the Gull till the receding of a curving point of land, which somewhat sheltered Shoreham village from the full sweep of the Atlantic winds, opened up the bright glow of the Coffin Island light—a stationary white light.

The young skipper headed directly for it.

As the minutes flew by if there was any change in the weather it was for the worse.

The rain began to fall, and the gale seemed to grow more violent, tossing the Gull about like a cork.

A small boat going before the wind makes worse weather than on any other tack, and George Stanton had his hands full to keep her up to her course.

"This is a tough night," the boy muttered to himself, "a good bit worse than I had calculated on. I guess it's worth all of \$20 to go off to Coffin Island on such a night. Still, if the mast holds, and I don't see why it shouldn't, we'll get there all right."

The wind and waves seemed in league to prevent the consummation of Mr. Deering's purpose, but the young skipper was not to be frightened off.

Through it all the stanch little boat pushed her nose seaward, gradually nearing their destination.

The island loomed larger and larger ahead, and the bright gleaming shaft of light grew bigger and brighter through the steaming atmosphere.

At last the boat was sheltered from the fierceness of the blast under a bluff, and soon afterward came into the comparatively still water of a little cove, where a small wharf, the only landing place on the island, projected to the west.

By the exercise of the same good judgment which had enabled him to bring the little craft in safety through the darkness and storm to her destination, George Stanton laid the Gull alongside the wharf and secured her.

Mr. Deering had come to the entrance of the cuddy as soon as he was sensible of the easier motion of the boat, and was therefore all ready to step on shore.

"Now, sir, you may come out, and I'll help you on the wharf," said the boy.

His passenger eagerly obeyed his summons.

"You have done well, my boy," he said, grasping George's hand. "I doubt if any boatman alive could have done better. I am very grateful to you."

Then they stepped up on the wharf and started for the gray walls of the lighthouse, which rose through the driving rain a few yards distant.

CHAPTER II.

THE RED POCKETBOOK.

As Mr. Deering walked up to the door to knock George Stanton glanced in through one of the windows on the ground floor.

He saw a youngish, ill-favored looking man standing by a stove with a red pocketbook in his hand, the contents of which he seemed to be investigating with eager attention.

Just then Mr. Deering knocked loudly.

George saw the man inside give a violent start and conceal the wallet in the breast of his shirt while he turned a startled look at the door.

He made no move to answer the knock, but stood in a listening attitude, his features working in a strange, nervous manner.

Howard Deering knocked again, louder than before.

George Stanton, whose attention was fascinated by the curious and suspicious movements of the man inside, saw him stoop suddenly and thrust the red pocketbook under an empty keg which stood against the circular wall and then come forward to the door.

He reached it just as Mr. Deering knocked for the third time, somewhat impatiently.

The man opened the door a few inches.

"Who's there, and what do you want on the island at this hour?" he asked in a surly tone.

"I am Rodney Deering's brother Howard, and I have

come from Boston in answer to a telegraphic message that he was ill unto death and wanted to see me," replied Mr. Deering.

The man, apparently the assistant lightkeeper, opened the door grudgingly and permitted the visitor, with George at his heels, to enter the lighthouse.

"Is my brother still alive?" Mr. Deering asked eagerly. The man nodded.

"Thank heaven for that," said the gentleman, fervently.

"He is asleep at present," the man said, watching his visitors with a shifty eye, which the observing young skipper of the Gull did not much fancy.

"This fellow is not to be trusted," he thought. "I wonder why he hid that pocketbook under the keg? That wasn't the act of an honest man."

"Where is my brother?" asked Mr. Deering, with a pathetic look around the room.

"In his bed on the floor above."

"I may go up there, may I not?"

The man nodded.

"Are you the assistant keeper?"

"I am."

"Your name is——"

"Jim Redmond."

"Redmond!" exclaimed Mr. Deering. "I have a clerk in my employ named Redmond—Philip Redmond. Is he——"

"He is my brother," replied the assistant keeper, without manifesting any particular interest in the matter.

"Ah, indeed. I was not aware he had a brother. He never mentioned that fact to me. I am glad to know you, sir. I will go upstairs, if you will pilot the way."

Jim Redmond hesitated a moment.

He shot a suspicious glance out of the corner of his eyes at George Stanton, who was in the act of removing his oilskins and sou'-wester, and then his look wandered over to the keg beneath which he had hidden the red pocketbook.

He seemed loath to leave the room while the boy remained there.

The young skipper noticed both looks, though he did not appear to do so.

Indeed, there was little that ever escaped the notice of his sharp eyes.

He would have made an excellent detective, for his powers of observation and deduction were remarkably keen.

Redmond, however, saw that he could not well refuse to show the visitor upstairs, so he reluctantly led the way up the circular iron stairway which communicated with the upper regions of the lighthouse.

"There's something very strange about that pocket-book," mused George, looking at the keg in a thoughtful way. "Something very strange, indeed. It is none of my business, and yet something tells me that all is not right about it. Can it be that that wallet belongs to the dying man upstairs, and that this Redmond has stolen it

and expects to make use of its contents after Rodney Deering's death? It is very possible. I don't like his looks for a copper cent."

George could hear the footsteps of the two men on the floor above, and then there was silence.

Some strange fascination drew the boy nearer to the keg which hid the wallet.

"I have no right to be so interested in this matter," he exclaimed impatiently. "Probably there is nothing in it. Only a freak of my imagination. And yet——"

His eyes sought the floor around the keg.

A tiny rim of red projected from under it, showing that in his haste Redmond had not wholly hidden the pocket-book.

No one, however, would have noticed this unless, like the lad, he had seen what had occurred at the moment after Howard Deering knocked on the lighthouse door.

Stanton thrust his hands into his pocket and started to walk to the window to look out into the night; but he hesitated and looked at the keg once more.

"I can't stand this," he breathed at last. "I must have a look at that wallet."

With the alertness of a person who was afraid of being caught in a mean act, George knelt down, lifted the end of the keg and drew out the pocketbook.

The first thing he noticed was the name "Rodney Deering" stamped in gilt letters across the flap.

"It is the sick man's pocketbook, after all," he whispered. "Jim Redmond seems to be a thief."

George undid the flap and looked into the book.

It contained a number of bills—probably \$100 in all—and several papers.

The boy looked through each compartment until he came to the last.

Here he saw a piece of parchment, yellow with age.

It had such a curious look that George drew it out to examine it.

At that moment he heard the heavy boots of Redmond on the iron stairs coming down.

In his haste to close the wallet and return it to its hiding place he failed to notice that the bit of parchment had dropped to the floor until he had put the pocketbook back under the keg.

It was too late then to replace the time-worn document, so he snatched it from the plank and thrust it into his pocket just as Redmond's head appeared below the level of the ceiling.

Whether the lightkeeper's assistant had seen the action or not Stanton could not say, but he certainly regarded the lad with a good deal of suspicion when he stepped into the room.

He made no remark, however, but went over and sat down on the keg, which he regarded for a moment attentively to see if it had been moved.

Possibly satisfied that it had not been disturbed, he took out his pipe and a package of smoking tobacco and started to fill his pipe.

"It's a rough night," he growled out at last, feeling called on to say something.

"Yes," answered the young boatman, "one of the roughest I've ever been out in."

"Are you a boatman?"

"I might be considered as such, and I might not. I own a catboat, in which I often take people out sailing and fishing on the bay. I wouldn't have ventured here on such a night as this only that Mr. Deering was afraid his brother might die before morning, and he was very anxious to see him alive."

"He won't live till mornin'," replied Jim Redmond, gloomily. "He's most gone now."

"That's too bad," said Stanton, in a sympathetic tone.

"I dunno," answered the man, meditatively. "It will probably be a good thing for his little girl."

"His little girl!" ejaculated George, in a tone of some surprise.

"Yes," nodded Redmond. "He has a daughter about fourteen years old. His brother, who is well off I understand—a Boston merchant—will look after her, I guess."

"Where is she?" asked the boy, interestedly.

Redmond jerked his thumb upward as if to intimate that she was upstairs with her dying father.

"Her mother——" began George.

"Dead these ten years," replied Redmond, blowing out a cloud of smoke.

"How long has Rodney Deering been on this island?"

"Six years. Three as assistant and three as head keeper."

"What is the nature of his illness?"

"A kind of quick consumption. Caught a bad cold four months ago, and it's fetched him."

Judging from the speaker's manner, he did not seem to be particularly distressed by his comrade's misfortune.

At that instant there was heard the soul-stirring cry of a man above, a moment of silence and then a poignant girlish wail floated down to them.

George started and looked toward the stairs, while Redmond half rose from the keg, his face turned an ashen hue, and the pipe trembled in his fingers.

"What was that?" asked the boy, almost knowing what the answer would be.

"That!" replied Redmond, recovering himself. "That was Flossie's voice. He's gone, I reckon."

"Gone!" answered Stanton, mechanically.

"Yes. Dead!"

CHAPTER III.

"I'LL HAVE YOUR LIFE!"

Jim Redmond was right.

Rodney Deering was dead after a largely misspent life. Not that he had been a bad man; no, only headstrong and impatient of restraint.

He had left home when quite young, after a quarrel with his father, and from that day until the hour he telegraphed his condition to his brother Howard at Boston no word had ever been received from him.

For some years he was regarded as having passed out of this life; but this impression was not correct.

Just why he had refused to divulge his whereabouts to his family even after he got his position on Coffin Island, in Boston Bay, was a puzzle he did not explain up to the moment his breath failed him forever.

He seemed to be glad to see his brother when Howard Deering's coming awoke him from his last sleep on earth.

What he had to say, however, during those few precious moments yet remaining to him, had reference entirely to his daughter, Flossie, who knelt in tearful sorrow by his cot, watching the sable pinions of the Angel of Death close in about her only living parent.

The one soft spot in Rodney Deering's heart was filled with his only child.

In all probability he would have died without giving a sign of his existence to his family but for her.

The certainty of his death brought the problem of her future before him so he sent for his brother Howard.

And Howard in answer to his eager appeal promised to care for the girl as if she was his own.

"She is not penniless," whispered the dying man, with a strange light in his eyes. "No, no; not penniless. You will find in my red pocketbook—I have it here," and he tore open his shirt and searched with a feverish eagerness for the wallet that Jim Redmond had stolen from him while he was asleep and Flossie's attention was diverted.

He could not find it, and his excitement grew intense.

Every fiber of his attenuated frame trembled.

Howard tried to calm him, but he might as well have tried to still the storm that tore around the lighthouse.

"Where is it?" he almost shrieked. "Where is it—Flossie's treasure? My heaven! I have been robbed, and by——"

Before he could frame the name of the thief a racking cough seized upon him.

He struggled like a madman with it.

Then a gush of blood started from his lips, he waved his hands wildly in the air, gasped and fell back—dead.

Flossie, with a heartrending cry of grief, threw herself upon her father's body and sobbed as if her little heart would break.

Howard closed his brother's glazing eyes, and then tried to comfort the orphan girl, who thenceforth was to live with him.

But what words can alleviate such a sorrow as hers at its acute stage?

It must take its course, and so until the gray dawn lightened up the eastern sky Flossie was inconsolable.

Then exhausted nature came to her relief and she closed her eyes in sleep.

Soon after George Stanton became aware that Rodney

Deering was really dead he began to feel tired and sleepy. He went to the window and looked out.

The rain had stopped and the gale seemed to be breaking up.

"Mr. Deering won't want to return before morning," he thought. "I may as well go down to the boat and turn in for the rest of the night."

So he told Jim Redmond to tell Howard Deering that he could be found on board his sailboat at the wharf.

The assistant keeper nodded and seemed to be relieved at the idea of the boy leaving the lighthouse.

George put on his sou'-wester, took his oilskins under his arm and left the place.

Curiosity, however, induced him to glance through the window when he got on the outside.

Jim Redmond still sat on the keg smoking his pipe, his eyes glued on the door.

At length he got up, tilted the keg and took up the red pocketbook.

He looked cautiously all about the room before he opened it.

Eagerly he examined each of the compartments until he came to the last, which he found to be empty.

He stared at it in a dumfounded kind of way for several moments, then he threw the wallet on the floor with an angry oath and sprang to his feet.

Stanton waited to see no more.

"It must be the bit of parchment I have in my pocket that he is after," he said to himself, in an eager whisper. "What earthly use can he have for an old time-stained bit of paper? I must examine it at the earliest chance and see if I can find in it the key to his anxiety to possess it. At any rate, I am glad I have it, for if it has any value it is now Flossie Deering's right to benefit by it."

He thrust his hand into his pocket, where he had put it, and drew it forth.

"I'll place it for safety in my wallet."

He took out a small well-worn black pocketbook, removed the rubber band and placed the bit of parchment inside.

"I'll look at it in the morning," he said, as he started to return the wallet to his pocket.

His hand struck on his hip and the pocketbook flew downward and disappeared in a crevice in the rocks.

"My gracious!" he exclaimed in a tone of consternation.

He knelt down and tried to insert his fingers into the hole, but he could not push them far enough in to even touch the wallet, which of course he could not see.

"What shall I do now?" he asked himself, not a little dismayed. "It would be fierce if I should not be able to recover my pocketbook with that parchment. Who knows but it might represent a fortune for Rodney Deering's daughter. I must mark the spot somehow and come back here after it in the morning."

He gathered a heap of stones together and made a little mound.

Then he took accurate bearings of the spot and stepped on to the wharf, which was close at hand, to go to his boat.

An hour afterward a man slouched past that little mound of stones, and stalking stealthily across the wharf stepped on board the Gull.

This man was Jim Redmond.

Putting his ear to the cuddy entrance, which was partially open, he listened.

Seemingly satisfied with the state of things, he pushed the slide wholly back and softly entered the little cabin.

He glided to the bunk where George Stanton lay in a tired sleep and noted his deep breathing with great satisfaction.

Then he took up his clothes, article by article, and searched them carefully, but whatever he was in search of did not seem to present itself.

"What can he have done with it?" he muttered savagely. "I am sure he has it, for I saw it in the pocketbook the moment Howard Deering rapped at the lighthouse door, and I then thrust the wallet under the keg. What a fool I was not to have retained it about me; but I was afraid Rodney would denounce me to his brother, for the moment he missed the paper I knew he would suspect me, in which case I should have been obliged to have turned my pockets out to prove my innocence. Still, why should this boy have taken that paper from the wallet? Is it because it looks so old and peculiar that it attracted his notice? Still I am puzzled how he could have known the pocketbook was under the keg. I have it!" he cried, with a smothered oath. "He was looking in at the window at the time and saw me hide it there. He is evidently no better than a thief himself. It's a wonder he didn't take the money, too. I wouldn't have cared so much if he had, if he had only left that piece of parchment, which is of no use to him, but which in my hands——"

The young boatman moved uneasily in his sleep and the man drew back into the deeper shadows of the cuddy.

Stanton, however, did not awake, and Redmond continued his useless search.

"Curse him!" he cried at last. "What has he done with it?"

The words aroused the boy and he sat up.

His sharp eyes showed him that he was not alone.

"Who's there?" he demanded, reaching out and grasping the intruder by the sleeve of his jacket.

"I'm here," replied Redmond, drawing a clasp knife from his pocket and opening it with his teeth.

"Who are you, Redmond?"

"Yes. Jim Redmond."

"And what do you want here in the cabin of my boat?"

"What do I want? I want that piece of parchment which you took from the red pocketbook I hid under that keg on the ground floor of the lighthouse. Give it up, or by heaven, I'll have your life!" and he pressed the blade of his knife against the lad's throat.

CHAPTER IV.

STANTON STEALS A MARCH ON REDMOND.

"What are you talking about, Redmond? Are you crazy?" asked Stanton, conscious that he was in a very ticklish position.

"No, I am not crazy, and you know very well what I'm talking about. I want that piece of parchment, d'ye understand?"

"I haven't any piece of parchment," protested George.

"You can't lie out of it, young fellow. You looked in at the window, saw me hide the wallet under that keg, and when I went upstairs with Deering you took advantage of my absence to take that wallet out from under the keg and examine it."

"You seem to know all about it."

"I do."

"All right then, have it your own way."

"Hand over that parchment," hissed Redmond.

"How can I hand over what I haven't got?"

"I say you have got it. You've hidden it somewhere about this cuddy. Tell me where or——" and the speaker pricked the skin of Stanton's neck with the point of his knife.

"Hold on there, Redmond. You're carrying this joke too far."

"You'll find this isn't a joke if you don't do as I tell you," said the man, fiercely.

"If you don't take that knife away from my throat you'll find this isn't a joke either," replied the boy, in a determined tone.

"Are you goin' to give up that parchment?"

"I can't give up what I haven't got."

"That bluff won't work with me."

"I'm not trying to bluff you. I haven't got what you're after."

Redmond found that he wasn't accomplishing much, and he was furious.

He was satisfied in his own mind that Stanton knew where the precious piece of parchment was, and he was determined to make him own up.

He gripped the boy closer with his left hand while with his right he again pricked George's neck with the sharp blade.

At that critical moment steps were heard on the wharf.

The sound distracted Redmond's attention for the moment and the young boatman, fully alive to his own interests, took immediate advantage of the chance.

With an upward movement of one of his arms he sent the knife spinning across the cuddy and grasped Redmond by both arms.

Just then Howard Deering stepped aboard the boat and poked his head in at the cabin door.

As it was pitch dark in the cuddy he couldn't see any-

thing, but it seemed as if something strange was going on in there—something like a struggle between two persons.

He took a match safe out of his pocket and struck a light.

He was astonished at the sight which met his view.

George Stanton, in very scant attire, was trying to hold his own against Redmond, who was fully dressed.

"What does this mean?" asked Mr. Deering, lighting a second match.

His words and presence caused a cessation of the conflict.

Stanton let go of his aggressor and squirmed out of his reach.

"I'll get square with you yet, my young boatman," hissed Redmond, satisfied that he could do nothing more just then toward getting his hands on the coveted piece of parchment. "You haven't seen the last of this thing by a jugful."

With those words he brushed by Deering, pushed his way out of the cabin and left the boat.

"What's the trouble, my lad?" asked the Boston merchant, after he had watched Redmond retire from the cuddy.

"The trouble is that I woke up to find that fellow in here rummaging around the place. He came after a bit of parchment which he says I took from a red pocketbook he had hidden under a keg in the ground floor room of the lighthouse."

"A red pocketbook!" exclaimed Mr. Deering, recalling his brother's dying words. "The last words my brother spoke referred to a red pocketbook on which he seemed to place great value. He was going to show it to me, when, not finding it on his person, where he evidently had been accustomed to keep it, he frantically declared he had been robbed by someone whose name he was unable to mention on account of a violent spell of coughing, which ended in his death."

"The thief was Jim Redmond, the man who just left this boat."

"How do you know?"

"Because I saw a red pocketbook in his hands, and I afterward discovered that the name of Rodney Deering was on the flap."

"Then he must be made to yield it up, since everything that belonged to Rodney is now the rightful property of his daughter, Flossie."

"If you will listen, sir, I will tell you how I came to know that Redmond had possession of the red pocketbook."

"Certainly I will listen to you."

Thereupon Stanton told Howard Deering all that the reader is familiar with in respect to the stolen wallet up to the moment George placed the piece of parchment in his own pocketbook and then accidentally let it fall into the hole among the rocks.

Deering was not only interested, but somewhat excited over the recital.

"It must have been the parchment, and not the small

amount of money in bills, to which my brother referred. The parchment contains some valuable secret, otherwise that rascal, Redmond, would not be so eager to get possession of it."

"That's the way I looked at it, sir. And now, owing to my carelessness, it is liable to be lost. However, I marked the spot with a small pile of stones and am in hopes of recovering it in the daylight. Should I be so fortunate as to be able to do so I shall hand it over to you at once. It would not be safe for me to retain it a moment longer than necessary, for that fellow believes I have hidden it on this boat, and he will not rest till he has made another and more thorough search."

A slight noise at the opening of the cabin caused Stanton and Mr. Deering to turn their eyes in that direction, and just in time to see a dark object, which they knew must be the head of Jim Redmond, draw away from it.

"The rascal has been spying on us, and he has probably heard every word of our conversation," said George, in a tone of disgust. "I doubt if it will do him much good, so far as getting on the track of the lost parchment, for I did not mention the exact spot where I dropped my own wallet. The best thing you can do is to demand your brother's wallet, containing the money, from him. I am a witness to the fact that he has it. Should he refuse to turn it over to you you can threaten him with arrest."

"I will do that; but he may defy me. I shall have to remain on the island while you go to the village, notify the government authorities of the death of my brother and bring over an undertaker to take charge of his remains. The rascal may make his escape in a boat while you are away."

"I shall try to recover my pocketbook before I go. As you will have to remain on the island with Redmond it would be better for me to take the parchment with me if I find it, otherwise he would certainly attack you to get possession of it."

"You are right," agreed Mr. Deering. "Take it with you by all means if you recover it. It might be of sufficient value to tempt the scoundrel to murder me for it while you were absent."

Morning was now beginning to dawn, so the young boatman put on his clothes, as further sleep was out of the question.

Mr. Deering said he would have to return to the lighthouse to look after his niece.

After he had gone, Stanton sat on top of the boat's half-deck and watched the sky lighten up.

By this time the gale had blown itself out.

The waters of the bay, however, was still very much agitated and dashed quite noisily upon the rocky shore of the island.

The sky was fairly clear of clouds and promised a fine day.

George looked around for some sign of Redmond, but he was not to be seen.

"I wonder what will be the rascal's next move?"

thought the boy. "He knows now that I had the parchment and lost it. He is hidden somewhere in this vicinity watching for me to begin the search for my wallet, and if I find it he is prepared to pounce upon me and try to get possession of it at all costs. I think I'll fool him. I'll start for the shore at once, get the undertaker and another man to come back with me, and then hunt for the pocketbook on my return. With three men on the island he would not dare attack me. Besides, I'll bring over father's revolver as an additional protection.

Having decided that this plan was the best, Stanton proceeded to put it into immediate execution.

He unmoored the Gull from the wharf, ran up the mainsail in a jiffy and steered out into the bay.

Hardly had he got clear of the wharf before he saw Redmond running rapidly down the rocks.

As soon as the rascal struck the wharf he saw that the young boatman had escaped him, and so he stopped and shook his fist at him, shouting out some words that the boy could not understand.

George paid no attention to the fellow, but laid his course direct for Shoreham village, hidden behind a distant point of land.

CHAPTER V.

REDMOND SCORES A POINT.

The young boatman made good time on his return trip and reached the landing-stage in front of his home a little after seven o'clock.

His mother was up and watching for him.

With the aid of her husband's spyglass, she had made out the Gull soon after she rounded the point, and she then hastened to get breakfast on the table, for she guessed George would have an uncommonly good appetite that morning.

She also noticed that the passenger he had carried to the island was not visible in the cockpit, so she judged he had remained at the lighthouse.

"Well, mother," her son said in his usual cheery tone, as he entered the kitchen, "you see I'm back all right."

"And I thank heaven that you are, my boy. I am sure that you found it a very rough night on the water."

"It was, indeed, mother. I don't think I've ever seen a much worse one afloat. It was a good thing that I carried Mr. Deering over to the island, for his brother died a short time after we reached the lighthouse."

"I am very sorry to hear that," said the little widow, sympathetically.

"His name was Rodney Deering, and he has left a little girl of fourteen for his brother to look after."

"Then the poor child is an orphan?"

"She is. Her mother died about ten years ago."

"It is fortunate she has this uncle who is willing to take charge of her."

"Yes, mother. He's pretty well off, I guess. He is a Boston merchant."

"The change from the island to a comfortable city home must prove advantageous to the child, though of course she is bound to miss her father. Sit up to the table now and eat your breakfast. Everything is ready and waiting. I dare say you are hungry after your sail."

"I should say I am. The sea air is uncommonly bracing this morning, and puts a fine edge on a fellow's appetite. Besides, I've got to return to the island as soon as I can."

"To bring back your last night's passenger and the little girl, I suppose."

"Probably so; but I've got to carry the undertaker and a coffin over with me, after I have notified the lighthouse inspector of the district that Rodney Deering, who was the head keeper of the light, is dead. By the way, mother, Mr. Deering promised me \$20 for last night's trip after he saw how rough the weather really was. He looks on it as a great favor that I was willing to carry him over in such a gale."

"Twenty dollars will come in very nicely at this time."

"Indeed it will," replied the boy, attacking the viands with a great relish.

The boy said nothing about his adventure with Jim Redmond, for that would only worry his mother, particularly as he was going back to the island where the man was.

After breakfast he called on Mr. Mold, the village undertaker, and told him he had a job for him.

"Why, who's dead, George?" he asked in some surprise.

"The head keeper of the Coffin Island light. I'll take you over to the island in my boat after awhile. You'll want to take a coffin, of course."

"What size man is he?"

"Now you've got me, Mr. Mold. I couldn't tell you because I didn't see him. I should think he was about the average size."

"I'll take a box over, and fit him with a casket after we bring him back. Who pays the expenses?"

"The man's brother, who is over at the island now. He's a Boston merchant."

"All right," replied Mr. Mold. "When will you be ready to start?"

"Probably in about an hour," replied the boy.

"I'll be all ready for you."

George had the address of the lighthouse inspector of that district, and he sent him a dispatch notifying him that Rodney Deering had died early that morning.

The undertaker and his assistant carried the box to the Gull.

"I'm afraid your boat is too small to fetch that box back with the corpse in it in the way it ought to be carried. Can't you get a larger boat?"

"Well, there's Captain Mason's sloop. Perhaps I can induce him to take us over."

The boy went to Captain Mason's house and found that he was willing to go over provided there was something

in it for him, and that George helped work the craft, as his son and assistant had gone to a neighboring town.

Stanton agreed, but before they set off he got his father's revolver and placed it in his hip pocket, so as to be prepared to defend himself in case Jim Redmond was looking for trouble.

They reached the island about half-past ten o'clock and the undertaker and his helper carried the box at once to the lighthouse.

Redmond was nowhere to be seen.

Mr. Deering told George that the assistant light keeper had been hunting about the rocks ever since he (Stanton) left the island.

Of course he was looking for George's lost wallet with the parchment in it, but there was no evidence that his search had so far proved successful.

While Mr. Mold and his man were attending to the body of Rodney Deering, Flossie was brought downstairs by her uncle Howard and introduced to Stanton.

She was a very pretty girl, with fair hair and nut-brown complexion, and a sylph-like figure.

Her eyes were red from weeping, and the expression of her countenance was very sad and depressed.

Stanton proposed that while the undertaker was getting the dead man ready for removal that they go down to the spot where the lost wallet lay and see if they could recover it.

Mr. Deering agreed.

"Do you think you can locate the spot?" he asked, with great interest.

"I marked it with a pile of stones. It is not far to the right of the wharf."

The stones were found just as George had described them.

He removed them and disclosed a crevice in the rocks, at the bottom of which the wallet could be seen.

The fissure was too narrow for a person to insert his arm, so George told Mr. Deering that he would have to go down to the sloop and get a boat-hook that he had seen on board.

In a few minutes he returned with the article and tried to probe the wallet out.

This was no easy job to accomplish, and their attention was so much absorbed in the work that they did not observe the cautious approach of Jim Redmond, who had been on the watch behind a rock ever since the sloop made fast to the wharf.

"I don't know whether I can get it out or not," said George, after he had failed a dozen times. "It's a most exasperating job."

"Let me try," said Mr. Deering.

The boy resigned the boat-hook to him, but his efforts were not rewarded with any degree of success.

Finally he gave it up and the young boatman took another try.

At the second attempt George succeeded in catching the point of the hook in the rubber band.

"I've got it," he said triumphantly, and with the use of a little dexterity he brought the wallet to the surface. "There you are," he said, holding it out to Mr. Deering.

Before the gentleman could take it, Redmond dashed forward, snatched it from the boy's hand, and dashed away across the rocks with a derisive laugh.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT THE PARCHMENT REVEALED.

The unexpected appearance of Jim Redmond took Mr. Deering and George completely by surprise, and for a moment they could only stare after the fleeing rascal, then the young boatman recovered his self-possession and started in pursuit.

He was as active as a young monkey on his feet and Redmond soon saw that he was being rapidly overhauled.

"I'll lead him away to the eastern end of the island and then put his nose out of joint," muttered the scoundrel, as he sprang forward from rock to rock, with an occasional brief glance over his shoulder at his young pursuer.

The rascal relied upon his greater strength to overcome the boy at the proper moment, then with the parchment again in his possession he intended to get away from the island in a small boat, belonging to the lighthouse, which was tied down at the wharf.

Stanton followed on Redmond's heels with the dogged resolve to wrest his wallet from him at all hazards.

He was thoroughly aroused against the fellow's perversity in trying to do the daughter of Rodney Deering out of what rightfully belonged to her alone.

Redmond presently struck a path that carried him down to the shore and out of sight of the lighthouse.

The boy was close at his heels when he turned a projecting rock and disappeared.

As Stanton himself rounded the rock he found Redmond crouching behind it ready to attack him.

The rascal struck George a stinging blow alongside of the head which staggered him, and immediately followed up his advantage.

"I've got you now where I want you," he hissed malignantly. "If you will butt in where you have no business you've got to take the consequences."

He sprang at the boy with a fierceness that clearly intimated his intention to do him up then and there.

George saw that he would not be in it with this burly rascal if he once got his hands upon him, so he dexterously evaded a hand-to-hand conflict by leaping aside.

Then he picked up a stone and fired it at Redmond.

The missile took effect on his shoulder, partially disabling his right arm, and wringing from him a howl of pain and fury.

"I'll kill you for that, you little monkey!" he roared, stooping down to retaliate on the same lines.

"Drop it!" commanded George, coolly, displaying his revolver and covering the man. "Drop it, or I'll put a ball into you."

Redmond straightened up surprised and discomfited at the appearance of things.

It was not a pleasant sensation to look into the menacing tube of a revolver leveled within a yard of his head.

It gave Redmond the cold shivers, for he was not overburdened with sand when the game was going against him.

"Turn that gun away, will you?" he snarled. "It might go off."

"If it goes off it will be your lookout," returned the young boatman.

"What do you want me to do?" growled the rascal.

"I want you to give up that wallet," demanded Stanton. "It's my private property, and you have no right to retain it."

"You can have it after I've taken out that piece of parchment that I want," replied Redmond, taking the wallet from his pocket and starting to remove the band.

"You have no claim on that parchment," said George. "It belongs to Flossie Deering, and you shan't remove it from my wallet."

"Then you don't get your pocketbook," cried Redmond, making a motion to return it to his pocket.

"Throw that wallet to me or I'll put a ball through your arm," said Stanton, in a determined tone.

"You wouldn't dare," blared the rascal.

"Wouldn't I? I'll give you three seconds to do as I tell you. One—two—three!"

Redmond sullenly refused to comply, whereupon instead of aiming at the fellow's arm Stanton fired apparently directly at his head.

His object was to thoroughly unnerve the rascal if he could, and he succeeded.

The ball whizzed so close to Redmond's face that he dropped the wallet with a howl of fear and started to run.

"Stop!" shouted the young boatman after him.

He emphasized his command with a second bullet, which brought the villain to a terrified pause.

"Now," said George, after picking up his wallet and advancing on Redmond, "hand out Rodney Deering's red pocketbook, or I promise you the third bullet won't miss you."

Redmond glared furiously at his antagonist, but the revolver was an all-powerful persuader, and he slowly and reluctantly produced the dead man's property and threw it on the ground with a curse.

"I'll get even with you some day, you monkey!" he hissed. "You've done me out of a good thing, and I shan't forget it, not if I live to be a hundred."

"You can go now," replied George, coolly, after taking possession of the wallet.

He watched Redmond take his way along the shore, then he started in the opposite direction up the path by which he had come, and soon reached the top of the rocks, whence he could see the lighthouse again and the ad-

vancing figure of Howard Deering, who had heard the pistol shots and was much concerned for the safety of the brave boy.

"Thank heaven you are safe!" exclaimed Mr. Deering, when he came up and grasped the young skipper by the hand. "What were those pistol shots I heard?"

"They were fired by me," replied George.

"By you?"

"Yes. I brought over my father's revolver this trip, for I feared that I might have occasion to use it to defend myself against Redmond. Well, it came in handy. I came upon the rascal under the bluff, where I guess he expected to do me up, and I compelled him not only to give up my wallet, but also your brother's pocketbook. Here it is," and the boy handed it over to Mr. Deering.

"You are a boy in a thousand," exclaimed the merchant. "I did not expect to get that pocketbook unless I succeeded in rounding that man up with the help of a constable."

While he was speaking George was taking the parchment out of his own wallet.

He tendered it to Mr. Deering.

"No one would think to look at that bit of paper that it was worth taking care of," said the boy. "And yet Redmond has made several strenuous efforts to get it and hold on to it."

The merchant contemplated the soiled, creased and ancient-looking document with much interest.

It was a piece of paper, which from its two folds looked to be about six inches one way by four and a half the other, perfectly regular in its oblong shape, as though it had been prepared for some purpose.

The paper was firm, thick and whole, and seemed like a kind of vellum.

"It must be pretty old," Mr. Deering said, thoughtfully. "No one uses such material nowadays to write upon. It was considerably used a hundred years ago by those who could buy it, scarce and high as it was."

"If it was so very expensive," said Stanton, "I should think only important matter would be written on it."

"Very likely this contains a secret of some value, or my brother would not have set such store by it as he seemed to do. There is hardly \$100 in money in the red pocketbook. When he spoke of Flossie not being penniless his manner indicated that her expectations represented more than that meager sum. Well, we will open it and see what this wonderful secret is."

He unfolded the bit of parchment with due care, George watching the operation with intense interest.

He naturally looked for some remarkable revelation.

The Boston merchant was not a little curious himself as to what the document contained.

Having spread it out carefully against the smooth face of a rock, they both gazed on it with eager curiosity.

To their surprise and great disappointment, nothing met their eyes.

The piece of parchment was blank.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM SHOREHAM VILLAGE TO BOSTON.

"Why, there's no writing on it," cried the young boatman in some astonishment.

"It is certainly very singular," said Mr. Deering, gazing blankly at the paper. "The writing must have faded."

"Then the parchment isn't worth all the trouble it has caused us."

"Apparently not. It is an interesting relic, however, and as such I will keep it. Possibly some chemist might be able to bring out the writing again, for the ink used in olden times was more substantial than our modern article. Still I have no great faith that what was once written on this piece of vellum will ever be revealed."

Thus speaking, the merchant refolded the bit of parchment and returned it to the red pocketbook.

"Let us return to the lighthouse and help Flossie get her things in order for taking away," said Mr. Deering, placing the red wallet in an inner pocket of his coat.

Half an hour later George and Mr. Deering carried Flossie's small trunk with all her worldly possessions down to the sloop, where the box containing her father's remains had already been conveyed.

Jim Redmond did not reappear until he saw that they were on the point of taking their departure, then George observed him walking toward the lighthouse.

In the offing a government tender was to be seen heading toward the island from the direction of Boston.

With Stanton's assistance the captain of the sloop hoisted the mainsail and subsequently the foresail.

The ropes which held her to the wharf were then cast loose and she glided away from the island under a fair breeze.

Flossie and her uncle sat on the extension roof of the cabin, with George Stanton, while Captain Mason steered.

Undertaker Mold and his men remained forward with the box.

"I am very glad to have met you, Stanton," said Mr. Deering, when the boat was well upon her way. "I don't think I could have got another skilled boatman to have taken me to the island last night. Therefore, I feel that it is due to you that I was enabled to see my brother before he died. The sum of \$20, which I promised you, scarcely expresses my sentiments, so I shall insist in making it \$50."

"No, sir. I cannot take so much from you for my services. I am perfectly satisfied with \$20."

"But it is my wish to give you \$50. By the time we land at Shoreham you will have lost the greater part of to-day, and for that you ought to receive some compensation."

"I think \$20 will cover everything, sir," smiled George.

The merchant shook his head, pulled out a well-filled pocketbook and tendered the young skipper of the Gull

five \$10 bills, which the boy finally accepted with considerable reluctance, much as the possession of this amount of money meant to himself and his mother at that time.

"Now," continued Mr. Deering, "if there is anything I can do for you hereafter, I hope you will communicate with me," and he handed the lad his business card. "I suppose you do not intend to remain permanently in such a small place as Shoreham. A boy of your evident abilities ought to seek a wider field of usefulness."

"I should like very much to get a start in Boston, or some other large city," said George, voicing the desire that was nearest his heart.

"Nothing is easier, if your mind is set in that direction. I will be glad to make an opening for you in my office. I am about to make some changes that will necessitate my taking on new help. I am arranging to open a branch establishment in New York. I am going to send my chief clerk on there to act as resident manager. He will probably take a couple of the other clerks with him. Their places will be filled by promotion, which will naturally create several vacancies at the foot. I should be glad to have you step into one of them."

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Deering. If I can get my mother's permission for me to go to Boston I will gladly accept your offer."

"I will speak to your mother myself, if you wish, and point out the undoubted advantages that would accrue to you by getting a proper start in the world. I should think she would have no great objection to moving to Boston herself. There are many nice places to live in the suburbs of the city, and the electric cars afford quick and satisfactory communication with the business center."

"Well, sir, I should be pleased to have you do so. You and Miss Flossie could stop at our cottage, instead of going to the inn, while Mr. Mold is preparing your brother's body for shipment to Boston. Will you do so?"

"I accept your invitation with pleasure and shall be glad to meet your mother. I think I shall be able to convince her that the proper field for your talents is the city of Boston."

When the sloop arrived at her wharf George Stanton piloted Mr. Deering and his bereaved niece to his mother's cottage.

Mrs. Stanton received her visitors with all courtesy and proceeded to make their brief stay as pleasant as possible.

She was all sympathy and kindness to the young orphan, and Flossie's heart warmed to her at once.

She prepared a nice dinner for them, and during the meal Mr. Deering opened up the subject of the young boatman going to Boston and taking a position in his office.

While Mrs. Stanton was obliged to admit that Shoreham offered comparatively no inducements for an ambitious boy, she seemed loath to consider the proposition of moving to a Boston suburb.

She had been born, brought up and married in Shore-

ham, and she protested that no other place would satisfy her as well.

"I can understand that feeling very well, Mrs. Stanton," replied Mr. Deering; "but remember you must consider your son's future. The world wants just such bright and energetic boys as your boy George is, and it is doing him an injustice to bury him in this antiquated village."

This was putting the matter right up to her in a way that she could not very well evade, and so she promised to think the subject over, at the same time thanking the merchant for the interest he was taking in her son.

At five o'clock a buggy was brought around to the cottage to take Mr. Deering and Flossie on to the next town, where they would catch a train for the city, a wagon conveying Rodney Deering's body in a casket, enclosed in a plain box, to the station.

"I shall expect to hear from you in a few days, Stanton," said the merchant as they were about to part. "At any rate I shall keep a place open for you."

"Thank you, sir. I hope I shall be able to go to work for you."

Flossie cried on leaving, for she had taken a great liking to Mrs. Stanton.

"Whatever your decision is, Mrs. Stanton," said Mr. Deering, "you must call and see Flossie after she is settled with my family."

Then the buggy drove away.

That night after tea George and his mother had a serious talk about his branching out in life, but no decision was reached.

A day or two later Mrs. Stanton received a letter from her only sister, a widow, in which the latter said she had decided to remove to Shoreham, so as to be near her, and asked her to look up a small cottage for her and her two children.

This letter suggested a plan to George.

"Mother, why don't you have Aunt Bertha come and live with you? Then I could go to Boston, and you need not leave Shoreham at all. I could run down once a week and remain with you till Sunday night. The distance is not far. Don't you think that such an arrangement would solve the whole difficulty?"

"But I don't like to have you away from me for a whole week at a time," objected the little widow, stroking her son's hair. "I should miss you dreadfully."

"You'd get used to that, mother, especially as you would know it was for my good. There is nothing in Shoreham for me. I am only wasting my time here. It has been my dream for months to break away from this village and get out into the bustling world, where fortune is to be made by those who have the grit and determination to push their way to the front."

"And you would really be contented to go away from mother and live among strangers, George?" she asked tearfully.

"I must do it some day. Why not now, when such a fine opportunity has presented itself," he said, putting

one arm lovingly about her. "Remember you are not really losing me. Boston is only a short distance from here, and you will know that I am in good hands when I am with Mr. Deering."

Mrs. Stanton, like all fond mothers, hated to part with her only son, even under such exceptionally favorable circumstances; but in the end she yielded to his solicitations.

Her sister agreed to come and live at the Stanton cottage, and then George wrote to Mr. Deering that he had obtained his mother's sanction to his coming to Boston.

And so ten days later George Stanton became office boy for Howard Deering, and took up his home with a respectable family in East Cambridge, not far from where Mr. Deering lived himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

GEORGE STANTON'S EXPERIENCE AS OFFICE BOY.

Howard Deering was general sales agent for a big hosiery mill in a Massachusetts factory town, and his salesrooms and counting-house was in the heart of Boston's business district.

His trade had grown extensively in the last few years, as the product he controlled became more and more in demand throughout the country.

He had just established a branch in New York, with a full line of stock, where heretofore he had only maintained a small sales office with samples on exhibition.

Mr. Deering had taken a great liking for George Stanton.

He saw that the boy had the making of a smart man in him, and he determined to push him ahead as fast as circumstances permitted.

Realizing that the lad would be brought in contact with many temptations to which he had been a stranger in the quiet little village of Shoreham, the merchant tried to surround him with the best home influences.

To this end he had personally interested himself in securing the boy a good home not far from his own, and he further invited George to call at his home at least once a week to take dinner and spend the evening.

Thus Stanton came into contact with Flossie very often, and they soon became very warm friends.

Mr. Deering had no objection to their growing intimacy; indeed, he rather encouraged it, for he knew that a pure, lovable girl can exercise a powerful influence for good over a boy thrown constantly in her society.

George found his duties as office boy congenial enough, for he had many chances to learn the business.

He did not have to get down at an unusually early hour to sweep out, as some office boys had to do, as there was a porter to attend to that.

The first thing he did every morning was to take a small leather bag and go to the postoffice for the early mail, which he deposited on Mr. Deering's desk for that

gentleman to go through when he arrived at about ten o'clock.

His time was chiefly taken up running errands, and this at first was a difficult matter, for he was unfamiliar with the Boston streets, which in the city proper are not the straightest in the world, although the big fire partially remedied the "cow-path" nuisance of Old Boston.

He also assisted the cashier and carried the day's deposits to the bank.

He was likewise at the beck-and-call of the bookkeepers and higher clerks.

George, being naturally obliging and even-tempered, soon made himself popular with his associates.

There was one exception, however, as always seems to be the case in a big office.

This exception was Phil Redmond, the brother of Jim Redmond, with whom Stanton had had the run-in with on Coffin Island.

Redmond was one of the bookkeepers, a rather good-looking, dashing kind of fellow, up-to-date in his manners and attire; in fact, he was the best-dressed clerk in the office.

He received a very fair salary, out of which he could easily have saved money had he been of a sensible, provident turn of mind, for he had no family responsibilities to make inroads on his resources.

But Phil never seemed to have a cent except on salary day.

The trouble was Redmond was something of a fast young chap.

He associated with a pretty rapid crowd, and had acquired a number of expensive habits that obliged him to scratch hard to make ends meet.

As a matter of fact, ends did not meet with him and were getting further and further apart every day.

He frequented gilded pleasure resorts at night, drank freely, smoked good cigars, played the races with varying luck, never missed a good show, and conducted himself generally as might be expected of a young man about town.

If he possessed cash enough he would have been a high-roller of the first water; but not being so fortunate he had to content himself with putting up as good an imitation of the real article as he was able.

Recently he had taken to gambling to try and better his financial condition.

He had skill and nerve, but more often than not he was a victim of sharper men at this business than himself, and consequently he was gradually getting deeper and deeper into difficulties, as a good part of his weekly wages went to square himself with his creditors.

Just why Redmond took a seated dislike to George Stanton would be hard to explain; but the fact remains that he did.

He was continually finding some fault with the bright office boy.

Stanton's growing popularity in the office annoyed him, probably because he was not exactly popular himself.

At any rate, he lost no opportunity to make life miserable for the lad, as the saying is.

Fortunately for George, Redmond was not such an important factor in the establishment that he could do the boy any great harm.

Flossie, who took her place in Mr. Deering's household just as if she had been his own daughter, developed a habit of coming to the city on a Saturday afternoon and dropping in at the office to see George.

At first the object of her frequent visits was not suspected by the employees of the house.

They were all very much interested in the pretty face and charming manners of the little orphan, whose recent bereavement, as shown by her black gowns, appealed to their sympathies.

Her naturally vivacious nature occasionally showed itself in flashes through the somber atmosphere which her father's death had drawn about her.

Every one could readily see that she was bright and clever, and all the clerks liked to exchange a word with her when she appeared at the office.

Phil Redmond, as soon as he found out that she was Mr. Deering's niece, tried to make himself particularly agreeable to her; but somehow or another Flossie did not fancy him for a cent, and she made no secret of her feelings on the subject, much to the bookkeeper's disappointment and annoyance, for he prided himself on being irresistible with the fair sex.

The clerks soon began to notice Flossie's partiality for Stanton's society, and then they began to twit him about her.

Of course they did not know that he met her once, and sometimes twice, a week at Mr. Deering's home.

George took their fun good-naturedly, and after awhile they got tired of roasting him.

It was different with Redmond.

He resented the boy's familiarity with Flossie, the more particularly because he could not help seeing that she liked George better than anyone else.

He made remarks about their intimacy to his fellow clerks in a way that showed he was jealous of the office boy.

"Mr. Deering ought to know about it," he remarked one Saturday afternoon, when Flossie was talking to George, while he was copying some letters at the press for the cashier. "He wastes a whole lot of the boss's time with that girl every Saturday. Look at him now. He's been fifteen minutes monkeying over that letter-press and chinning to her. It ought to be stopped."

"I don't know that it is any of our business, Redmond," replied the bookkeeper he was addressing, who was very friendly toward Stanton. "It's up to Mr. Deering to find it out for himself. He's got eyes."

"Oh, he's up to his eyes in business these days. He doesn't see all that's going on out here. How could he, when he's in his private office most of the time?"

"That's all right, but there isn't much that escapes him, just the same," nodded the other bookkeeper in a conclusive way.

"Well, that seems to escape him," growled Redmond.

"That kid makes me sick."

"Why do you call Stanton a kid? I think he's a pretty healthy-looking lad."

"He's too fresh."

"It seems to me that you're down on him for some reason."

"Well, I'm not stuck on him," replied Redmond, with a sneer.

"What's the matter with him? As far as I can see he's the smartest office boy we've had since I've been here."

"Bosh!"

"All the fellows like him except you."

"I have the right to dislike him if I chose. I don't care for his face."

"Why not? Now that is just what I do like about him. He has got a wonderfully attractive face—a face that inspires confidence. I'd be willing to trust that boy with every cent I possess."

"You would, eh? Then that shows what a chump you are. Don't you know that the records of the police department show that faces are the most deceptive things one can go by. Those chaps, and he is one of them, who look as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouths, are the ones who do you up on the quiet, and then light out to Canada to save themselves from going to jail."

"I am sure you wrong Stanton if you entertain any such suspicion against him."

"Maybe I do," replied Redmond, with a short, unpleasant kind of laugh, "but just the same I wouldn't take any chances with him. I am always afraid of church-goers, and I understand he attends church and Sunday school every Sunday."

"Then you ought to fight shy of me, Redmond, for I go to church regularly, and I never missed Sunday-school when I was younger."

"There are exceptions to every rule," answered Phil, with a sickly grin.

"Then you ought to give Stanton the benefit of the doubt and not condemn him before he has done something to warrant your suspicions."

The appearance of Mr. Deering in the counting-room at that moment caused a cessation in the conversation between the two bookkeepers.

They both noticed that though he looked directly at Stanton and Flossie, whose heads were close together at the moment, he passed them by without a word.

CHAPTER IX.

DETECTING A CRIME.

Time wore on and George Stanton was promoted from office boy to an under clerkship.

He had given thorough satisfaction ever since he had been in the office, and Mr. Deering was well pleased with his progress and the proficiency he displayed.

Weather permitting, the boy never failed to pay his mother a weekly visit, and once in a while Mr. Deering permitted Flossie to accompany him, as she evinced a growing attachment for Mrs. Stanton, who treated her like a daughter.

Stanton had been a year in Mr. Deering's employ when he was transferred from the main room to the cashier's department.

He was given a desk back of the cashier in the brass-wired enclosure which heretofore had been solely occupied by that important employe.

Part of George's new duties was to go out and interview people who were behind in their paymnets, and to make collections.

In this line he soon proved remarkably successful, bringing in more money than his predecessor, who had occupied a desk on the outside of the enclosure.

Stanton continued on friendly terms with all the clerks except Phil Redmond.

He and Phil never spoke except when business compelled them to, and then their intercourse was of the briefest kind.

George was now eighteen and Flossie had developed into a lovely miss of fifteen.

The two were almost inseparable—that is, they were never tired of being in each other's society.

The girl continued to visit at the office, but not as often as before.

One day Flossie appeared at the counting-room unexpectedly about half-past twelve.

She had been shopping on Tremont street, and the idea had occurred to her that she would run down to the office and get George to take her to lunch.

Stanton was in his den, as he called the cashier's enclosure, and Flossie came to the little window and peeped through at him.

"I see you," she exclaimed, with a merry laugh.

"Goodness! Is that you, Flossie?" said George. "I didn't expect to see you to-day."

"Didn't you?" she replied, roguishly. "Well, I thought I'd give you a surprise."

"You've done it for a fact," he answered, putting his hand through the window and shaking her little gloved one. "I'm awfully glad to see you."

"Are you really?"

"Don't you know I am?"

"Well," she said, cocking her head demurely on one side, "I'm not telling everything I know."

"That's a very wise resolution," he laughed.

"Are you very busy?" she asked.

"I am always busy during office hours, Flossie."

"I mean are you very busy at this moment?" she persisted.

"Why do you ask that question?"

"Because I want you to take me out to lunch."

"What, right away?"

"Yes, right away."

"You didn't come all the way from East Cambridge just to ask me to take you to lunch, did you?" he grinned.

"Of course not, you foolish boy! I've been up in the retail district shopping. I thought I'd sooner lunch with you than go alone into a restaurant, so I just came after you—there!"

"You have certainly done me a very great honor, Flossie," said George, smilingly; "but I'm not sure I can get off right away. Mr. Richards, the cashier, usually goes to lunch before me, and he hasn't started yet."

"Then I'm going to ask him to let you go first to-day. I'm sure he'll oblige me."

"That would hardly be fair to take advantage of his good nature."

"But I want you to go now," she persisted, with a little wilful pout, for she was now accustomed to have pretty much of her own way with her uncle Howard, who had grown very fond indeed of his dead brother's child.

"Here's Mr. Richards now. I'll speak to him."

Stanton stated the case and the cashier told him he could go to lunch then.

There happened to be no one in the counting-room at that moment but Phil Redmond.

He looked unusually tired and haggard, as if he had been up all night.

There was a restless, hunted look in his eyes, too, that seemed to indicate that his mind was ill at ease.

For the past week his face had worn a gloomy expression, and he had been taciturn and morose in his ways.

As he had had such spells before, no one took any notice of his conduct.

He went about his work in a mechanical manner that showed an absence of interest in his duties, but as he got through with his daily task in good shape no fault was found with him.

Flossie went into her uncle's private office to wait for George.

She left the door, which commanded a view of the cashier's enclosure, open.

Stanton went to the lavatory to tidy himself up, for now that Flossie was going to eat with him, he expected to patronize a more tony restaurant than the little one he was accustomed to go to.

The cashier remained in the enclosure engrossed with his duties.

At this juncture the telephone bell rang.

The office boy, who was eating his frugal lunch in the neighborhood of the booth, answered the ring.

After hearing what the voice at the other end of the wire wanted, he told the person to hold the wire, and started for the cashier's pen.

"Mr. Richards," said the boy, "there's a man on the phone who wants to see about an important order which

he says has not been delivered according to promise. Mr. Deering is not in, so I guess you'd better talk to him."

"I guess I had," replied the cashier, coming out of the enclosure and slamming the wire gate to after him.

The gate to the enclosure was provided with a spring catch, which always held it secure, so that the cashier was obliged to use a key to let himself in.

This was necessary precaution during business hours, as Mr. Richards frequently left his den for one reason or another, leaving his safe open and his money drawer in the desk unlocked.

Of course there was not much danger that any one but Stanton, whose desk was within the enclosure, and who also carried a key to the lock, would attempt to enter the cashier's domain.

None of the other clerks had any right there.

Besides, any one in the counting-room could have seen an intruder had he made an attempt to go in there.

Still, as we have remarked, it was considered a necessary precaution to have the spring catch on the door.

On this occasion Phil Redmond was looking directly at the cashier's enclosure in a dreamy kind of way when Mr. Richards slammed the door to, as we have seen.

For some reason or another the catch on this occasion did not grip as usual, and the door swung open an inch and remained so.

Mr. Richards, being in a hurry to reach the 'phone, did not notice what happened, but Redmond did, and a peculiar alert expression sprang into his eyes.

He glanced about the empty counting-room and listened for a moment intently.

The coast was clear apparently.

The fact of the matter was, Phil Redmond needed a certain sum of money badly.

He needed it to prevent the exposure of certain things he was connected with, which exposure might ruin him by leading to his discharge from his situation, in spite of the length of time he had been with Mr. Deering.

He had been taxing his brains for the past week in a fruitless effort to devise means to secure the money in question.

He had about reached the despairing stage, and was wondering how he would come out of his difficulties, when the failure of the spring in the cashier's door to catch most unexpectedly pointed out a way for him to secure the money he wanted.

It was a desperate expedient, it is true, but Redmond was feeling desperate enough just then to attempt most anything.

It was a rare chance that would probably never happen again, and on the spur of the moment, urged on by his dire necessity, he determined to take advantage of it.

At that moment there was apparently no one about to see him, and by a little agility he felt he could reach the cashier's money drawer and get away with whatever money was in it at the time, which he believed would amount to more than enough to help him out of his scrape.

Casting another sharp look around the counting-room and feeling reassured, he darted over to the enclosure, pulled open the gate, reached out to the cash drawer, opened it and grabbed a big pile of bills he saw there.

He thrust them into his pocket as he retreated and closed the gate softly.

This time the latch caught all right, and Redmond returned to his desk in guilty triumph.

Redmond thought he had abstracted the money from the cashier's drawer unperceived, but such had not been the case.

George Stanton's eye had been on him from the moment he entered the enclosure till he withdrew with the money in his fist.

The way it happened was this:

George, after washing up and brushing his hair neatly, had entered Mr. Deering's private room by a side door to notify Flossie that he was ready to go out.

Flossie had left the door facing the cashier's den partly open.

Stanton happening to take up his position at the proper angle to command a view of the enclosure, and accidentally casting his eyes in that direction at the critical moment, had seen Redmond's guilty act, and for a moment was too amazed to move.

He could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes, so utterly unprepared was he for this discovery of Redmond's crookedness.

But he recovered his self-possession in a moment.

"Excuse me a moment, Flossie, I want to see the cashier," he said, and hurried toward the telephone booth.

Mr. Richards was too busily engaged at that moment to be disturbed, and Stanton waited for him to come out to impart to him the astounding revelation.

While he was waiting Phil Redmond got his hat and started to leave the office.

George detected his purpose in a moment.

"He mustn't leave the office with that money on him to dispose of or I shall never be able to prove that he took it," he breathed, as Redmond passed outside of the counting-room enclosure.

The resolute boy therefore hurriedly followed the thieving bookkeeper.

As Redmond turned the outside corner of the counting-room partition, Stanton glided up behind him and laid his hand on his shoulder.

The bookkeeper turned as if stung by some venomous insect, and his guilty conscience showed in his face.

"What do you want, Stanton?" he asked in shaky tones, as soon as he recognized the boy.

"I want that money you took from the cash drawer a moment ago," he replied, sternly.

"What do you mean?" quavered Redmond, his face turning a shade paler.

"I mean just what I said. You stole into the cashier's enclosure just now and helped yourself to all the money you could grab."

"You're a liar!" snarled Redmond, taking a step toward the office door.

"I'm not a liar, for I had my eye on you all the time."

"How could you, when there was not a soul in the counting-room?"

"You forget the door of Mr. Deering's private room. That was partially open and I was in there with Miss Flossie."

"Curse you! Take that!"

Redmond, white with fury, struck the boy a heavy blow in the face, knocking him down, and attempted a dash for the door.

Stanton, however, recovered himself in time to grasp the rascal around the waist and a desperate struggle ensued.

CHAPTER X.

SWEETHEARTS.

The struggle outside the counting-room immediately attracted notice, and both the cashier, who was leaving the booth at the moment, and Flossie ran out to see what was the matter.

A policeman who was standing in the corridor outside also ran in to investigate the disturbance.

Redmond had fastened his hands on Stanton's throat and was trying to choke him into releasing his hold upon his person.

The combatants swayed about, each desperately bent on accomplishing a certain purpose.

As soon as Flossie recognized that George was one of them, and that he was seemingly getting the worst of the encounter, she screamed and rushed to his assistance.

The officer, however, stepped in ahead of her, and grasping Redmond's two hands tore them away from the boy's neck.

"Don't let him get away," gasped Stanton, as he sank back exhausted and panting for air.

"Oh, George! Dear, dear, George!" cried Flossie, throwing her arms impulsively about his neck and bursting into tears. "What has he been doing to you?"

Stanton offered no objection to her embrace, but he made no reply, for he could scarcely speak.

At that exciting moment Mr. Deering entered the office.

He was astonished at what he saw, and of course wanted an explanation.

Redmond, after making an ineffectual struggle to get away from the policeman, gave up the fight and stood sullenly awaiting his fate.

"What's the meaning of this, Redmond?" asked the cashier, clearly surprised at the situation, while Mr. Deering also showed his astonishment in his eyes.

The bookkeeper made no reply, since he had none that would stand muster.

Then it was that Stanton, releasing Flossie's arms from his neck, made his charge.

"If you will search Mr. Redmond you will find a bundle of money on his person which he took from your cash drawer."

"Impossible!" ejaculated Mr. Richards. "How could he reach the cash drawer? I was only away from the enclosure a moment, and the gate was locked."

"Nevertheless I saw him pull open the gate, steal into the place and grab a bunch of money. He cannot deny it."

"Is this true, Redmond?" demanded Mr. Deering, sternly.

The bookkeeper was silent, but his face admitted his guilt.

"Look into your drawer, Mr. Richards, and see if the money is missing," said the head of the house, quietly.

"There is no occasion to do that," sullenly spoke up Redmond, putting his hand into his pocket. "I admit my guilt. There is your money," and he held the roll of bills out to the cashier, who mechanically accepted it. "I suppose I shall have to go to jail for this, so the sooner it is over with the better."

"Why did you take that money, Redmond?" asked Mr. Deering, more in sorrow than in anger.

"Because I needed the money."

"Are you so badly off you must steal?"

"I am," replied the culprit, gloomily.

"Walk into my office, Redmond. I'd like an explanation of this matter."

"I have none to give you. I have ruined myself, and that is all there is about it."

"I'd like to talk with you at any rate. I am very sorry that this has occurred. I did not expect it of you after your many years of service in my office."

Redmond uttered a reckless little laugh, glared savagely at Stanton, and then followed his employer into his private room.

"I suppose I had better remain, hadn't I?" suggested the policeman.

"I think you had," replied Mr. Richards. "I should be glad to hear your account of this unfortunate affair, Stanton," he added, turning to the boy.

George made his statement, which of course was very brief.

"I can't understand how Redmond opened that gate," said the cashier in a perplexed tone, "unless he has been contemplating his crime for some time and had a key made to fit the lock."

"Are you sure that you shut the gate when you went to the 'phone, sir?"

"I am positive that I did. I remember hearing it slam behind me."

"Then he must have had a key," said the boy.

"I'll show you how I slammed the gate," said the cashier when he and George returned to the counting-room.

He opened the gate with his key and then shut it to as he had done when he was called to the booth.

Then to his surprise the mystery was unraveled, for the

gate failed to catch and remained open one inch on the rebound.

"That accounts for it. We must get a locksmith at once, for the lock is evidently out of order."

Mr. Deering called the officer inside, told him he had decided not to press a complaint against his recreant bookkeeper, and dismissed him with a \$5 bill.

Phil Redmond never returned to his desk.

He was quietly dismissed from his position, and another clerk was promoted to fill his place.

Mr. Deering told Stanton and his cashier to say nothing about the affair, but to leave the other clerks to believe that Redmond had resigned of his own accord.

The matter having been thus permanently disposed of, Stanton took Flossie out to their belated lunch, and he did not fail to tell the blushing girl how much he thought of her for making that effort of coming to his aid.

Stanton was rather glad than otherwise that Phil Redmond was out of the office, because he had long since given up the idea of ever getting upon a friendly footing with the bookkeeper.

Flossie was also pleased to think he was gone, because she did not like his face.

None of the office force regretted his departure, because nobody liked him much.

So, on the whole, he was not missed even a little bit.

Flossie's unpremeditated demonstration that day in the office had duly impressed Stanton with the cheerful idea that the girl really thought a good deal more of him than appeared even on the surface.

He hoped this was true, as he had come to think a good deal of Flossie himself, and young as he was he had built air castles concerning the future in which the charming little miss figured conspicuously.

Things went along in the office very nicely now as far as Stanton was concerned.

He seemed to be growing smarter and brighter every day, and Mr. Deering was correspondingly well pleased.

Thus another year passed away and George, now eighteen, was trying to coax the down on his upper lip into something that faintly resembled a mustache.

Flossie had also advanced another year on the road of life, and was now sweet sixteen.

Stanton continued to call on Flossie at least once a week with unflinching regularity.

On one of these occasions he learned to his dismay that he was about to lose her for a time.

Flossie imparted the intelligence, with tears in her eyes, that Uncle Howard had arranged to send her to complete her education at a well-known boarding school for young ladies, situated fifty or sixty miles from Boston.

"Isn't it too mean for anything that I shan't be able to see you at the office any more after next week," she said, with a little lump in her throat.

"But that isn't the worst of it. You won't see me Thursday nights any more after next week," said George soberly, feeling as if life would soon not be worth living.

"Will you miss me?" she asked, her pretty eyes filling up.

"Will I? You can just bet I shall. You are the one friend I think the world of, and when you leave Boston I shan't care much whether school keeps or not."

"Do you think so much of me as all that?" she asked, wistfully.

"I think more than that of you," said Stanton, stoutly. "I like you next to my mother. I like you just as much as if you was my real sister. Don't you wish you was my sister?"

Flossie was going to utter yes when it suddenly occurred to her that another girl in that case would be sure to take him away from her some time, and she didn't feel as if she wanted to give him up at all.

"You must write to me once a week, Flossie," he said, after they had talked the matter over a little while, "and I'll write twice a week to you."

"I'll write twice a week, too," said the girl eagerly, smiling through her tears.

"Maybe you won't have time to do that, so I'll only ask you to promise me one letter a week, but that one I'll expect."

"I promise," she replied; "but you'll write me two, won't you?"

"Sure I will."

"As I'm going away a week from next Monday, you come and see me Sunday, and Tuesday, and Thursday and Sunday again. Will you?"

"Of course I will."

Before Stanton went away that evening he said that on the whole he was glad she wasn't his sister. That he'd much prefer to have her for his sweetheart. Would she be his sweetheart?

Flossie blushed, smiled and said she would.

Then George kissed her, said she was the finest little girl in the world, and that they would be sweethearts as long as they lived.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST ROUND OF THE LADDER OF FAME.

George Stanton felt like a fish out of water after Flossie had departed for the boarding school.

Mr. Deering soon observed the change in the boy, and he decided to carry out a plan he had had in view for some weeks.

His New York office had been growing more extensive in its operations, and the manager had requested additional help.

What he particularly wanted was a clerk familiar with the financial end of the business, so the merchant called Stanton into his office one day and asked him how he would like to go to New York as cashier of the branch office.

This was an unexpected and important advancement for the boy, and he was taken quite by surprise.

"I should like to go very much, sir, if you think I am competent to fill the position satisfactorily," replied George.

"I haven't any doubt about that whatever," said Mr. Deering. "Well, we will look upon the matter as settled. You had better write to your mother about it at once. When you go down to Shoreham on Saturday you can remain a week and then I shall send you right on to your new duties."

Mrs. Stanton did not like the idea at all of having her son go so far away as New York, but as the die was cast, and the change too important for the boy to miss, she yielded to the inevitable.

Two weeks later George Stanton reached the metropolis of America and gazed upon the skyscrapers and other wonders of the big city for the first time.

He went to board with a very nice family in Harlem, near One Hundred and Twenty-fifth street, and it was not very long before he began to feel quite as much at home in his new surroundings as he had in East Cambridge.

He soon got acquainted with some very congenial young men who lived in his neighborhood, most of whom were members of a select social club that had rooms on Seventh avenue.

He was proposed as a member and duly elected.

The Manhattan Social and Literary Club soon developed a political bias in favor of a gentleman well known in the district who was a candidate for nomination for the Board of Aldermen.

The club gave an entertainment once a month, every other one of which, being a "stag" affair, went under the name of a "smoker."

It was at one of these "smokers" that the name of the gentleman who had the office "bee in his bonnet" was brought forward, eulogized and a resolution introduced and carried that the club support him in the event of his receiving the nomination.

This was Stanton's first insight into politics, and thenceforward he became very much interested in the outcome of the matter.

Finally the gentleman in question received the nomination, whereupon the club members got busy to help secure his election at the polls.

Stanton was of very little use in that direction, as he was a comparative stranger in the district, and such people as he knew were friends of the candidate.

But there were other ways he could help along the good cause, and as he proved both a willing and enthusiastic worker, he made himself well liked in the club.

He was introduced to the candidate, with whom he had the honor of shaking hands, and from whom he received words of thanks and encouragement.

He received invitations to attend "smokers" given by

other clubs, generally purely political in character, some of which he accepted.

At a grand ratification meeting, held at the rooms of the district headquarters, he listened to the first political speeches he had ever heard in his life.

This style of oratory rather fascinated him, and he was easily induced to accompany a party of friends who had volunteered to visit different sections of the district in an express wagon, rigged up with painted cloth signs, and a couple of gasoline torches, and "speil" for the club's Aldermanic candidate.

Stanton wasn't expected to make any remarks himself, as he had not been coached in the campaign issues, but he had charge of the literature, and was relied upon to see that none of the naughty streets boys who favored the opposition tore off or disfigured the candidate's lithograph.

He listened very intently to the speeches made by his friends and other more important orators that were occasionally introduced, and soon was letter-perfect in all the important points advanced by the party whom the aldermanic nominee represented.

A few days before election there happened to be a dearth of speakers on the express wagon, and Stanton volunteered to help fill the awkward void.

He was permitted to do so, and his first political speech surprised not only himself but the two club friends who were on the cart with him.

"You're all to the good, Stanton," was the verdict of his companions, when he sat down and the wagon started for another corner to hold forth to a new audience. "You've got the issues of the campaign down fine. Who coached you?"

"Nobody," replied the boy. "I've kept my ears open and took in all I heard you fellows and the other speakers talk about."

"Upon my word," remarked one of the two, admiringly, "you didn't miss anything of any consequence. If our aldermanic candidate had heard you put it all over his opponent he would have been tickled to death. You've got a fine voice all right, old fellow. It's a pity we didn't have you on the stump from the start-off."

They put him forward at all the other stopping places, so that he made six speeches that night.

After that Stanton spoke the remaining nights of the campaign, and was highly complimented by various professional speakers who heard him.

On election day he was appointed as one of the "watchers" at the polls, and it was noticed that he proved to be one of the most earnest and consistent workers for the organization that supported the club's aldermanic candidate.

He carried the results of the election district at which he had served to the club rooms where the candidate received the "returns."

It seemed a pleasure for him to report that in that district the candidate had a clear majority of the votes cast.

Finally about midnight, when it became clear that their man had been elected, a procession was formed, headed by a band of music, which had been engaged as soon as it became evident that things were coming their way, and that the alderman-elect at the head of the line, and the club members and other enthusiastic partisans walking behind, Stanton and his associates paraded the principal streets of the district and made Rome howl for a couple of hours, at the end of which the successful gentleman "set 'em up" for everybody.

The election was now a thing of the past and politics was relegated to the background once more in the club, but Stanton did not forget his small elocutionary triumphs, and resolved to be there with both feet the next time his services should be called upon.

In fact, politics had in that brief time acquired such a fascination for him that he joined the regular district organization, at the suggestion of the captain of his election district.

During the winter the organization, to keep the interest of the voters alive, gave monthly "smokers" at which entertainment was provided by professional vaudeville talent, interspersed by three-round bouts by clever amateur boxers, some of whom aspired to pugilistic honors.

George never failed to attend these affairs, and at the last one he was induced to get up on the platform and make a speech on the political situation generally.

This was his first notable effort in that line, and he acquitted himself with such general satisfaction that he was recalled to say a few words more.

Many of the prominent politicians of the district were present on the platform on this occasion, and they were so favorably impressed with his oratorical powers that they made a note of the fact with the view of using this budding Demosthenes when the occasion presented itself.

The leader of the district had Stanton introduced to him, and he in turn made the boy known to the other big lights, and it was generally admitted by the knowing ones that the lad was a comer.

Before spring came around every voter in the district had either seen or heard about young Stanton, and he had actually become quite popular, although he was unaware of the fact.

When he entered the organization clubroom of a night at least half of those present nodded to him in a familiar way, while the leader and his aides always had a pleasant word to exchange with him.

His attractive personality had of course a great deal to do with this popularity.

He had such a sociable way about him and seemed such a good listener when any one was airing his private sentiments that no one could fail to like him.

During all this time Stanton gave great satisfaction to the manager of Mr. Deering's New York office.

He attended strictly to business during office hours, never made mistakes, and was considered the star clerk of the branch.

He maintained a regular correspondence with Flossie, who often bewailed the fact that he was so far away from her.

They met, however, during the Christmas holidays, George and his mother being guests at the Deering home for a week, and a very happy time the two young people had together, renewing their vows of eternal constancy.

CHAPTER XII.

STANTON BECOMES CAPTAIN OF HIS DISTRICT.

In the latter part of the month of May Stanton received a letter from the leader of the assembly district asking him to call at his house.

Wondering what the big politician wanted with him, George made the visit.

"I should like to have you accept the captaincy of your election district, Stanton," said the leader. "I find that you are a smart young fellow, well up in local politics, and by long odds the most popular person in your immediate neighborhood. What do you say?"

"What's the matter with Murray, the present captain?" asked George.

"He has just handed in his resignation. He is going out West."

"I hardly think I am equal to the responsibilities of the position. Besides my business——"

"This won't interfere with your regular business in the least. I can guarantee that. We want men for captains who are well liked, and who show some energy in handling their districts. You have been recommended to me by several of the members of the Manhattan Social Club, with which you are connected. But I may also say that I have had my eye on you for some time as a promising young man of my district who deserves to be encouraged. I wish you to understand that our organization appreciates and rewards such services as you have already rendered us."

"But, sir, I have had no experience as a captain."

"That's all right. Murray will take you in hand and put you next to all that you require to know. Then it will be up to you to make a good showing. You will receive all the help from me that I can render. You will, of course, be handicapped by the fact that your district shows a majority in favor of the opposition. This majority was at one time much greater than it is now. Murray succeeded in cutting it down somewhat, and I have no doubt but that you will do even better. At any rate I have decided you are the man for the place, and I want you to accept it."

"Will you give me a little time to consider my answer?"

"Certainly, if you insist, but I shall be much disappointed if you turn the offer down."

"I will let you know inside of a week."

"Very well. I shall be at the General Committee rooms next Wednesday at eight o'clock. Let me have your reply then."

"Very well, Mr. Partridge."

The first thing George did was to call on Murray, the present captain, and have a talk with him.

He wanted to find out just what would be expected of him, then he would be able to figure as to whether he thought he would be able to fill the bill or not.

"Oh, you won't have any trouble at all, Stanton. I'd take it if I was you. It will give you a standing with the organization and help you to a job if you ever want one. The leader himself has got to treat his captains well if he expects to keep at the head of the district. Partridge is liable to have a contest at the next primary in September, and it isn't impossible but he may be turned down. It all depends who goes up against him."

"Well, let me know what I have to do as captain."

"Sure," replied Murray, who then proceeded to outline the more important things an election district captain has to look after.

"Partridge will take you around to the Harlem Police Court and introduce you to Magistrate Dunne. It's handy to know him sometimes when one of your voters gets into a little difficulty that lands him at the station and he is afterwards brought before the court. For instance, the other day Janitor McNulty, of the Bensinghurst Apartment House, in my district, laid a man out with a club, and the fellow had him arrested and swore he'd put him through. But he didn't. McNulty sent for me to come to the police station. I found him in a cell and had a talk with him. On his own showing the case looked a little difficult of adjustment; but I wasn't discouraged. I had a talk with the sergeant at the desk, and he assured me McNulty was sure to go up the river. That didn't seem encouraging, did it?"

"No," admitted Stanton.

"Well, after I had got hold of all the facts, I called upon the chap whose head had been opened up and found him in a very bad humor indeed. I talked to him awhile and finally convinced him that it would be to his interest not to press the complaint. I assured him that McNulty had a good pull and would get off with a fine. Instead of having the city collect the fine, which I thought would be about \$10, I suggested that he accept that amount and an apology from McNulty and call it off. He agreed, and so next morning when the janitor was brought up in court he was discharged at my request because the man was not in court to maintain the charge."

George grinned at this little story, and thought Murray was quite a diplomat in his way.

"As captain you will have a little patronage to dispose of in the way of appointing two election inspectors, a poll clerk and a ballot clerk. These little jobs are much sought after by persons who wish to evade duty, and cannot conscientiously swear that neither they nor their wives are not worth more than \$250, either in personal property or real estate. Then on election day you will employ six or eight helpers to stir up lazy voters, and attend to such other work as you will find necessary for them to do. On the night before election the leader will furnish you with funds necessary to cover these expenses. Some captains hold out a part of this as a personal perquisite; but I never do, as I always find uses for the whole of the money. The captains are not asked for an accounting, for it is presumed the money is spent as intended."

Murray told Stanton a lot more on the subject, and the boy went home with his head full of details and pointers, all based on the present captain's personal experience in the district.

Stanton on the following evening consulted with many of his club members, and they all advised him to take the captaincy if he had a real leaning toward politics.

So on the following Wednesday night he went around to the General Committee rooms at eight o'clock.

Leader Partridge had not yet arrived, but the secretary of the organization had a confidential talk with him and seemed to be much pleased that he had decided to accept the captaincy on trial.

Partridge didn't show up till nearly nine.

There was a mob of small political heelers and others waiting to buttonhole him, and it was some time before George got a chance to speak with him.

At length Partridge called him over and asked him what decision he had arrived at.

"I'll accept your offer conditionally, sir."

"All right. What are the conditions?"

"That if I find I can't handle the district as well as I think I ought to you will accept my immediate resignation."

"I don't think you'll have any trouble making good. Have you seen Murray?"

"Yes, sir."

"He put you up to the inns and outs of the job, didn't he?"

"He did."

"He didn't say anything to discourage you?"

"No, sir."

"Come into the office."

Stanton followed the leader into his sanctum, where the secretary had his desk, and our hero was duly enrolled as captain of the ——— election district of the ——— assembly district, the appointment to take effect in a few days.

Thus George Stanton took his first step up the political ladder, which eventually was to prove a ladder of fame to him.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON NAHANT POINT.

On the first of August Stanton was twenty and he received a three weeks' vacation.

He went directly to Shoreham and spent the first week with his mother.

The other two weeks Flossie expected him to spend in her society at the Deering cottage at Sandwich Beach, Nahant, on Massachusetts Bay.

Although George had had little to do with boats for three years, he had not forgotten his old-time skill in handling a sailboat.

The Gull had been leased to a fisherman during its young owner's absence, but the boy easily obtained possession of her for a fortnight's use, as he intended to sail over to Sandwich Beach in her, and use the craft for little excursions with Flossie as the chief, if not sole, attraction.

As Mrs. Stanton had also been invited to spend the balance of the season at the Deering summer cottage, she prepared to accompany her son on the Gull.

"Well, mother, are you all ready?" asked George at nine o'clock on Monday morning, as he came downstairs with his suitcase in his hand.

"Yes, my son," she replied. "You may carry that small trunk down to the boat, and by the time you return I will have my bag ready."

Fifteen minutes later the Gull left her wharf and headed for the point.

An hour and a half later she was off Coffin Island, with its gray lighthouse shining in the morning sunshine.

It was nearly noon when they passed to the south of Deer Island and entered the big bay.

The wind had been so light that it had taken the Gull more than two hours to sail about seven miles.

"At this rate it will take us half the afternoon to reach the beach," said George impatiently. "I guess we'd better pipe to lunch, mother. What have you got in the provision basket?"

"Some sandwiches, a small pie and a piece of cake, with a bottle of milk."

"All right. Spread 'em out on the half-deck. I'll tie the tiller so as to keep her head to the wind and then we'll lunch. This is like old times. To say the truth, although I haven't been out here in three years, and that's a good long time, it seems as if it was only yesterday that I put in at Swamscott to escape a heavy blow, because I was loaded down with fish and didn't want to lose any overboard."

About one o'clock the breeze freshened, much to the boy's satisfaction, and the Gull made a dash for Sandwich Beach, which was in plain view.

Nahant is a bold promontory connected with the mainland by narrow ridges of sand and stone thrown up by the ocean.

It was once the most fashionable watering-place in New England, but after the destruction of the big hotel on the point the tide of pleasure-seekers went elsewhere, largely to Swamscott.

The Deerings liked Sandwich Beach because it had all the advantages and none of the disadvantages of a summer resort.

The long beach was hard and smooth, shelving gently and with a splendid surf.

The picturesque cottages and villas gave it a gay appearance.

It was three o'clock when the Gull pulled in at a wharf, and George made her secure.

It was but a short walk from there to the Deering cottage, and the two visitors were received by their friends with open arms.

George and Flossie took a short walk together, and finally joined the afternoon bathers.

After disporting a short time in the very light surf they dressed and reached the cottage in time to dress for dinner.

After the meal every one sat out on the veranda until it began to grow dark, when George and Flossie once more wandered off together.

This time their stroll led them towards the rocky bluff, which rears its head 150 feet above the level of the bay.

"Do you know, George, it seems ages and ages ago that I first saw you on Coffin Island," the girl said, as she clung to the boy's arm.

"Why, it's only three years."

"They are three very long years."

"They haven't seemed so long to me. I was remarking to mother, while we were eating our lunch within plain sight of this beach, that it appeared almost like yesterday when I was last sailing in these waters aboard the Gull. Then I was merely an every-day boatman with no prospects. Now I hope I am on the high road to fame and fortune."

"Why, are you really looking forward to becoming famous some day?" she asked, with a smile.

"Why not? I think it's a great thing to make a name for yourself as well as mere wealth. I should like to be something above the average. For instance, if I could become President of these United States, it would suit me very well indeed."

"Why, the idea!" and the girl gave utterance to a rippling laugh. "Do you really aspire as high as that?"

"Well, I believe in aiming high; then maybe you may hit something worth while. For instance, if I found it unattainable to get myself elected President I shouldn't turn up my nose at a Governorship. If that was out of my reach I wouldn't refuse to become a Senator if the position was offered to me."

"And if you couldn't get that?" she asked roguishly.

"I'd take anything I could get to begin with, of course;

but in the end the office of an United States Senator would be what I should covet."

"Then you'd have to live in Washington."

"For a part of the time, yes. I suppose that would suit you, wouldn't it?"

"Me! Why, what would I——"

"You'd have to live where your husband did."

"My husband!" she exclaimed in some confusion.

"That's what I said. I thought it was understood between us that you were going to marry me some day. Have you changed your mind?"

Flossie blushed and looked down on the sand.

"Are you sure that you really want me to?" she asked softly.

"Say, Floss, how many times do you want me to answer that question? Nearly a year ago, a few nights before you started for your boarding school, I told you that you were the only girl in the wide world that I cared for. I meant it, just as I mean it now, and as I shall mean it a year or a dozen years for that matter, from now. Of course if you want to back out you've a right to do it. If you've seen some fellow you like better than me——"

"But I haven't, George," Flossie protested, with burning cheeks.

"Well, I'm glad to hear it, for I shouldn't care a rap whether I lived or not if you went back on me."

"I'll never——"

She broke off with a suppressed scream as two men suddenly jumped out into the path before them from behind the shelter of the rocks at the extreme end of the point which they had unconsciously reached.

The actions of the two men were decidedly menacing.

That, coupled with the fact that this spot was the most lonesome at that hour in all Nahant, made the encounter particularly unpleasant.

"What do you want?" demanded Stanton, drawing back and pulling Flossie behind him.

"Whatever you've got about you," replied the foremost stranger, roughly.

The voice sounded strangely familiar to his ears, and he peered through the gloom at the speaker.

"Is this a hold-up?" he asked, coolly.

"You can call it what you please. Hand over your money and other valuables, or we'll make things mighty unpleasant for you and the lady."

"I think we've met before, and that your name is Jim Redmond," said Stanton, not at all dismayed by the threatening aspect of the situation.

The man uttered a curse.

"Who are you?" he snarled, taking a step forward and seizing the boy by the arm.

Stanton shook his arm off.

"It makes no difference who I am, but it will make a whole lot of difference to you and your associate if you don't sheer off and leave us alone."

"Show a glim, Phil, and let's see who this chap is," he said, sharply.

The speaker's companion struck a match, and as the light flared up Stanton recognized not only Jim Redmond, but his brother Phil also.

Both of them looked to be in pretty hard luck.

The flash of the match also served to bring George's face, and Flossie's, too, into bold relief for an instant.

"George Stanton and Flossie Deering, by all that's lucky!" exclaimed Jim Redmond, with something like a note of triumph in his tones.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE REDMONDS.

As the match flared out and the gloom of night enveloped the four figures once more, Jim Redmond grasped his brother by the arm and held a whispered consultation.

Stanton, paying no further attention to the intruders, drew Flossie's arm within his own and started to leave the spot.

But they had barely taken a dozen steps before Jim and Phil Redmond followed with rapid strides and placed themselves in a position to cut off their retreat.

Stanton, seeing that they meant mischief, prepared to defend himself and Flossie.

He was a strong and stalwart youth, and was confident he would be able to beat off both of these men in a hand-to-hand conflict unless they were armed, and he did not think they were.

"Stand back!" he exclaimed in a determined tone. "If you lay a hand on either of us it will be at your own risk."

"You talk big, young fellow," laughed Jim Redmond, tauntingly; "but you'll find that wind don't go down with us. We both owe you a grudge of long standing. You did me out of a fortune and my brother out of a job and a wad of money. Now the time has come when you've got to square up, see?"

"You ought to have been grateful that Mr. Deering did not prosecute you for robbing his brother of that red pocketbook. In any case it would have done you little good. The piece of parchment which you thought so valuable amounted to nothing, for there was no writing on it."

The man laughed mockingly.

"It was of value to me. Perhaps Deering has saved it as a curiosity; if so, he can hand it over to me with a few bones that we need in exchange for his niece."

"What do you mean, you rascal?" cried Stanton, angrily.

"I mean that now we see a chance of getting a hold on the old man we're goin' to make the most of it. This young lady will go with us and stay with us till her uncle antes up the parchment and a thousand plunks. Then we'll let her go. As for you we'll let you off this time so you can carry our message to him, and you can thank your

lucky stars that I've changed my mind about layin' you out."

On hearing these words Flossie clung in terror to her companion's arm.

"Don't be frightened, Flossie," whispered George, reassuringly. "These rascals shan't molest you as long as I can prevent it, and I fancy they'll have their hands full trying to polish me off."

The gaunt and haggard appearance of the Redmond brothers had given the boy the idea that they were not as formidable as they looked, and consequently he believed he was a match for them both.

But Stanton underestimated his opponents, as he presently discovered to his chagrin.

Their desperate situation, and the prize they saw within easy reach, nerved the two rascals to complete their purpose at all hazards.

While Phil Redmond advanced to secure Flossie, Jim Redmond closed with Stanton.

The girl uttered a thrilling scream, while George made a plucky fight in her defence.

Phil dragged Flossie away from her young protector, clapped one hand over her mouth to stifle her cries, and then bore her off out of sight around the bluff.

Stanton, furious at the success that seemed to be attending the scoundrels, fought with all the energy he was capable of, beating Jim Redmond almost to a standstill and preventing him from making his escape.

But at the moment victory was in his grasp his foot slipped on the damp rocks and he went down head foremost, striking his forehead a blow against a sharp rock that partially stunned him.

Jim Redmond, his face puffed and bleeding from the pummeling he had received, took instant advantage of the opportunity thus afforded him, and when Stanton pulled himself together a minute later his antagonist had disappeared.

"The rascals!" he muttered, as he got upon his feet and wiped the trickling blood away from his forehead. "They've carried Flossie off. But they shan't escape me as long as I have breath in my body. I'll follow them and wrest her from their grasp at every hazard."

He knew that Jim Redmond must have followed his brother around the bluff.

That was their only safe path to escape observation for the time being at any rate.

But by following close upon their heels he did not see how they could ultimately make good their escape, burdened with their fair prisoner.

The fact that they might have a boat at hand quite escaped him.

The boy hastened to follow what he judged to be the track taken by the villains.

He jumped from rock to rock and sped across little patches of sand until at last, after rounding the bluff, he came in sight of them again.

They were standing close to the water's edge, and one of them was bending down and seemed to be pulling on something.

As Stanton dashed forward, with blood in his eye, he saw that Jim Redmond had the painter of a rowboat in his hands, while his brother was in the act of stepping into the boat with Flossie in his arms.

The girl had ceased to struggle, and from the position of her head, which lay inertly upon Phil's shoulder, it was apparent she had fainted.

With a shout of anger, George rushed at them.

Jim turned his head at the moment, and seeing how near Stanton was, he gave the boat a shove-off, waded out a few feet and sprang into her.

Then seizing the oars, he began to row toward a small sloop that lay a short distance out upon the throbbing waters.

"Come back, you scoundrels!" shouted the boy furiously, dashing into the surf as though he had a mind to swim after the boat.

A mocking laugh from Jim Redmond, that was echoed by his brother, was the only response he received.

It would have been a vain and foolhardy attempt for George to have made any further effort to overhaul the boat, for she was now a dozen yards from the shore, in deep water, and the sturdy arms of Jim Redmond was rapidly widening the distance.

He could only stand there, almost up to his waist in the boiling surf, and watch the abductors of Flossie glide up alongside the sloop, lift the unconscious girl on board and follow themselves.

Jim attached the rowboat's painter to a cleat on the sternrail, while his brother carried Flossie into the small cabin, where he left her and returned to help Jim haul up the sails.

They then both went forward and lifted the anchor by means of a small drum windlass, when the sloop's head fell off, and she drifted away under the influence of the tide and light wind.

As soon as the anchor was on deck, Jim went to the tiller and put the craft on a course that would carry them up along the northern shore of Massachusetts Bay.

Stanton groaned as he watched the sloop gather headway, and finally disappear in the gloom of the night.

He saw that the rascals had the best of him, and that he was powerless to interfere further with whatever iniquitous project they had in mind.

"My heaven!" he ejaculated, almost despairingly. "To think those two ruffians have Flossie in their power. How she will suffer when she comes to her senses! Can I do nothing to rescue her? Nothing to defeat the villains?"

Suddenly, like an inspiration from heaven, an idea flashed across Stanton's brain.

His boat was at the wharf a mile below.

She was an unusually fast craft for her size.

He would follow the Redmonds in her.

Fifteen minutes later he jumped on board the Gull, cast loose the sails, hoisted them and cast off from the wharf.

Then he headed the sailboat for Nahant Point.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHASE OF THE SLOOP.

When Stanton finally weathered the point he didn't believe that the Redmonds were more than a couple of miles ahead of him.

He followed the same tack he had observed them to take, at approximately the same distance from the shore.

The wind was so light that George fumed with impatience, since the Gull made very little headway as the moments dragged slowly by.

"The folks must be wondering what has become of Flossie and I," thought the boy as he struck a match, looked at his watch and noted that it was nearly eleven. "I'm sorry now that I didn't delay long enough to send a note to Mr. Deering, briefly explaining matters. Well, it cannot be remedied now. They won't see anything of me again until I fetch Flossie back with me."

After midnight the breeze freshened a bit, and the Gull made better progress.

The sloop ahead, however, had the same advantage, the only question being which boat covered the most water.

All night long Stanton sat with the tiller in his hand, every once and awhile straining his eyes into the night in the hope that he might catch sight of the chase.

The gray light of morning at last began to lighten up the sky, and George now became more alert than ever.

A thin mist lay upon the surface of the water, which prevented the boy from making anything out at a greater distance than fifty or sixty yards.

At a little before five the sun peeped above the distant watery horizon, and the mist began to melt and scatter under its warm rays.

The first thing Stanton saw was the shore about half a mile away on the left; then as the seascape broadened he made out the sloop he was in quest of.

She was a mile and a half ahead, and half a mile further out.

The possibility that he might be mistaken in his identity was small, as she showed a new white patch on her mainsail, a mark he had particularly noticed as she got under way off the point.

George secured the tiller and went down into the cabin to get a small telescope which was strapped to the forward end of the cuddy.

Returning with this to the cockpit, he leveled it at the distant sloop, and then all doubt was set at rest, for he easily recognized Jim Redmond seated at the tiller.

Phil Redmond was not in sight, so the boy guessed he was taking a snooze below.

There were quite a number of four-and-afters to be seen in different directions, most of them making directly for Boston.

Jim did not seem to pay any attention to the Gull, which was trailing him, as he had not the slightest suspicion that Stanton was a foot nearer than Nahant at that moment.

Thus an hour passed by and the two boats, under a better breeze, were drawing closer to each other, which showed that the Gull was easily the faster craft.

The wind continued to freshen since sunrise and at seven o'clock the sailboat had cut down the space between her and the sloop by half a mile.

The Gull was now going along at a lively pace over the sparkling water.

Though a little spray broke over the half-deck at times, not a drop came as far aft as the cockpit.

The wind was abaft the beam and the sail hardly needed any attention.

There was a short boathook, which made a formidable weapon in the hands of a resolute person, lashed under the seat which circled the cockpit, and George cut it loose so as to have it at hand for instant use.

His intention was to run alongside the sloop, board her and trust to luck to do up the Redmonds.

It was a risky proceeding in light of the odds against him, but he was in that mood that nothing short of a couple of loaded weapons pointed directly at his head would have caused him to waver in the part he had marked out for himself.

At eight o'clock the sloop was less than three-quarters of a mile from the Gull, and George noticed that Jim Redmond cast frequent glances at her, though he appeared as yet to have no suspicions as to her true character.

By peeping under the boom once in awhile George was able to note what was going on on board of the sloop.

Presently he saw that Phil had come on deck and was eyeing the sailboat intently.

The sloop was still half a mile in advance when Stanton, taking another look at her, saw Flossie step up out of the cabin and look around.

Phil went up to her presently and spoke to her, pointing toward the cabin.

Flossie objected to going below again, and kept her eyes on the Gull, which it was possible she had identified, as she had sailed in the boat with George many times.

Phil went up to his brother and spoke to him.

Then Stanton noticed that Jim altered the sloop's course so that she began to stand out to sea.

That move compelled Stanton to disclose his true colors.

He moved the tiller over and pointed the Gull's bow directly for the chase.

Of course the Redmonds discovered at once that they were being followed, and they showed considerable excitement.

Flossie, too, took a sudden interest in the proceedings, and began to wave her handkerchief at the Gull.

The new point of sailing proved to be advantageous to the sailboat, and she closed in very fast now on the sloop.

It wasn't long before the two boats were within speaking distance of each other.

The Redmonds now were able to make out Stanton at the tiller of the pursuing craft, and Flossie made that pleasing discovery at the same moment.

Phil grabbed Flossie and tried to force her below, but the girl was equally determined that she would not go down into the cabin again, for she put up a strenuous fight against it, struggling with all her might against the man.

Phil could easily have overcome her if he had wanted to be rough enough, but he was evidently afraid to hurt her, for fear of future consequences, so he soon found he had his hands full in trying to get her down the short companion-way.

In some way, when the Gull was within fifty feet of the sloop, Flossie managed to escape from Phil's grasp, and then she jumped on to the roof of the cabin and ran forward.

Phil looked after her a moment, and then, evidently making up his mind that she must be recovered and secured below, whether she would or not, he leaped on the cabin, too, and started for her.

Flossie uttered a scream when she saw him coming, and finding herself cornered deliberately sprang overboard as he reached out to grab her.

"My gracious!" cried Stanton, in dismay, heading the sailboat directly for the spot where she had gone down, and grabbing up the boathook.

The sloop, with the aghast Redmonds, flew on her way without making any attempt to come about to her rescue.

Flossie came to the surface a few yards ahead of the Gull, and with wonderful presence of mind she began to swim for the sailboat.

Stanton threw his boat up into the wind, and as she drifted toward the girl he held out the boathook toward her.

When it came within her reach she grasped it, and George drew her close to the side of the boat, so that he could reach her with his hands.

"Let go of the hook now, Flossie; I've got you safe," he said, catching her by one of her arms.

She obeyed obediently.

Then with both his arms he drew her, dripping like a nymph of the waters, into the cockpit.

She threw her arms around his neck and sobbed out:

"Dear, dear George!" and fainted dead away.

The sloop containing the Redmond brothers continued on its way out to sea.

CHAPTER XVI.

TWO HEARTS WITH BUT A SINGLE THOUGHT.

With the Gull to look after, and an unconscious girl on his hands, Stanton was in a quandary.

He allowed the sailboat to drift and attended to Flossie.

By chafing her hands and temples and dashing a tin

cupful of water into her face, he succeeded at last in bringing her to her senses.

"Now, Flossie," he said at last, "you will get cold if you stay out here in your wet clothes. Go down into the cuddy, remove all of your garments and cover yourself up in the blankets of one of the bunks. You'll have to stay there till we get back to Sandwich Beach, which won't take long in this smacking breeze."

"Yes, George; but do tell me first how you managed to overtake that vessel."

Seeing that she was determined to know all about her rescue before she went into the cuddy, Stanton gratified her curiosity in as few words as possible.

Flossie then went into the cuddy, he shut the slide over until she had had a reasonable time to take off her dripping garments and turn into the bunk, and then he opened it up again to give her plenty of air.

George could dimly make out her head from where he sat at the tiller, and they managed to carry on a conversation, though both naturally had to speak in a louder key than ordinary.

It took about two hours for the Gull to run up the coast to Sandwich Beach.

There was quite a crowd on the wharf when the boy ran the sailboat in and made fast to the inner side of the pier.

George wrote a brief note to Mr. Deering and sent it over to the cottage by a messenger.

In a short time Mr. and Mrs. Deering and a servant, with a bundle of clothes for Flossie, came down to the wharf and went on board the Gull.

While Mrs. Deering was in the cuddy helping her daughter to dress, George told Mr. Deering the story of their thrilling little adventure.

"The miserable scoundrels!" commented the Boston merchant, with considerable feeling. "To abduct our Flossie in that high-handed manner. You're a plucky boy, George, and you have placed us under a debt of gratitude we shall not forget. We were up all night in a state of anxious suspense over your and Flossie's absence. When the Gull was reported missing from the wharf we naturally thought you had taken Flossie out for a sail, and we felt somewhat relieved until midnight came and you did not return. As the wind was very light we believed you had got almost becalmed off shore; but still we were very anxious as the hours went by and there was no sign of you. After sunrise this morning we became thoroughly alarmed when the two men we had sent on the bluff to look out for the sailboat returned with the word that she was nowhere in sight. We could not understand it, and I telegraphed up and down the coast—over to Swamscot, down to Marblehead and other nearby places in my eagerness to obtain some trace of the Gull. Well, thank heaven, everything is all right now; but we have had a great shock."

"By the way, Mr. Deering, what have you done with that piece of parchment that was in your brother's red pocketbook?"

"It is still in the wallet in my house safe. Why do you ask?"

"Because Jim Redmond was going to include that in the price of Flossie's ransom."

"Did he say so?"

"He did."

"Of what use would it be to him? I suppose he thinks, as we did at first, that it contains some secret writing."

"I told him that the parchment was no use, that it was entirely blank; but he laughed, as if that fact did not disturb him. Do you think there is some secret about it that he is acquainted with, but which you and I could not see through at the time we examined it?"

"It is possible. I will re-examine it carefully when I get a chance, and see if I can make anything out of it."

"It would be a good idea, sir, for I think there must be something in the parchment, after all."

Flossie and her mother now came out of the cuddy, and the entire party started for the cottage.

Next day Mr. Deering went to Boston in the little excursion steamer and swore out a warrant against the Redmond brothers for abduction.

It was three weeks before they were caught by the detective, who spent that time searching for them.

They were jailed and subsequently brought to trial, when Stanton had to come on from New York to appear against them.

The jury found them guilty of the crime and they were sent to the State prison for a term of years.

In the meantime George spent a very enjoyable two weeks at Nahant with the Deerings and took Flossie out many times on the Gull.

The Sunday night before he left he interviewed Mr. Deering, with Flossie's permission, on the subject nearest both their hearts, and obtained the merchant's consent to their engagement.

So he and Flossie were now definitely engaged, with the understanding that their marriage was to come off after three years.

He bought his sweetheart a lovely diamond ring in New York when he got there and sent it on to her.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONCLUSION.

When Stanton returned from his vacation he was enthusiastically welcomed back to New York by all his friends in Harlem.

The primary election was coming on and Partridge was confronted with an opponent, a well-known young lawyer, for the leadership of the assembly district; consequently he looked to all his captains to do their best to have him re-elected for the coming year.

He sent for Stanton as soon as he heard he was back in town and had a heart-to-heart talk with him on the subject.

The boy promised to see that he got the majority of the votes to be cast by the party voters in his election district.

He kept his word, induced the bulk of those entitled to vote at the primary to come forward and put in a ballot for Partridge, and thus carried his district for the regular leader by an overwhelming majority.

Partridge, who was re-elected, complimented his new captain on his showing and thanked him for the earnestness and zeal he had displayed in his interest.

At the November regular election George worked hard to keep the Murray voters in line and to add a few more to the total.

His success was greater than was looked for, and his services in the party's interest were duly lauded at a meeting of the General Committee, on which occasion he was called on the platform and presented with a diamond breastpin as a prize reward in consideration of the fact that his district had made the best showing out of the fifty-three in the assembly district.

At the social club election just before Christmas Stanton was elected secretary by an unanimous vote, and assumed the office when he returned to New York after spending the holidays at his home in Shoreham.

Late in the month of May William Miller, the manager of the New York office, was taken seriously ill.

As soon as the news was communicated to Mr. Deering he notified Stanton to assume charge of the branch until Mr. Miller was fit to resume his duties.

This threw a lot of extra work and responsibility on George's shoulders, but he was equal to the emergency, and business went on with the regularity of clockwork.

Mr. Miller returned to the office in season to relieve Stanton for his regular August vacation, but as he was not the same man he had been before his illness, Stanton, it was understood, would hereafter help him out.

Partridge, the district leader, had another contest that year at the primaries, and barely held his own, though Stanton worked like a beaver in his interest.

The opposition candidate did everything he could to win the boy over on his side, but George was true blue and would not desert Partridge.

The leader was grateful to him for his exertions in his behalf and promised to stand by Stanton if the occasion ever presented itself.

That November George cast his first vote, and was quite proud that at last he had attained all the privileges of a full-fledged American citizen.

At the regular annual meeting of his club he was elected its president by a good majority.

"We'll be putting you up for the Assembly next," said one of the members jokingly to him.

Stanton laughed and wondered if he ever would see his name on a regular ballot.

Flossie graduated that year, and Stanton was present, with the Deerings, at the commencement exercises.

He sent his promised wife flowers enough to bury her under.

He spent the entire month of August with her at Sand-

wich Beach this time, and their wedding was set for the middle of December.

Mr. Miller having decided to retire permanently from the management of the New York office, Stanton succeeded him on the first of September.

Much to George's surprise a movement was developed that year in the district to have him nominated for the Assembly, but he declined to run on the ground that the growing business of the branch office of the hosiery business demanded his constant attention.

In December he was married to Flossie, and they spent a short honeymoon in Florida.

Mr. Deering had forgotten to re-examine the piece of parchment which had remained ever since Rodney Deering's death in its compartment in the red pocketbook.

When Flossie became Mrs. George Stanton he handed the wallet over to her as a remembrance of her father.

One night George came in and found her looking at the blank piece of vellum, which had also slipped his mind.

He took it out of her hand, and then told her how Jim Redmond had made such a strenuous effort to get possession of it at the time of her father's death.

"What could he want with an old time-stained piece of blank paper like that?" she asked her husband in surprise.

"That's what I would like to find out. There seems to be some mystery connected with it that I can't understand. Your father placed great store by it, I know. In fact, he claimed on his death-bed that it represented your fortune."

"My fortune!" she exclaimed incredulously.

"Yes, dear."

"Why, there isn't a single mark on it—it's nothing but a blank piece of vellum," she said, tapping it with one of her pretty fingers.

"I believe it once contained some writing, and that the ink has faded out for good," replied George. "Once your uncle suggested taking it to a chemist's and seeing if he could revive the ink; but he never carried this idea out."

"Let us experiment ourselves," suggested the young wife. "If sympathetic ink was used, heat may bring it out."

"That's right," answered Stanton, very much interested. "We might try a hot iron as a starter."

They went into the kitchen and a flat-iron was put on one of the burners of the gas-stove.

After it had become hot enough a thin piece of cloth was placed over the bit of parchment and the iron was applied.

They waited the result with some little excitement.

In a few minutes the cloth was removed and the vellum was found to be covered with writing.

George wrote it all down on a sheet of white paper before the vellum cooled and the writing faded away again.

It proved to be explicit directions as to the locality where a barrel of Spanish doubloons had been buried in the sands of a certain cove on the Isle of Pines, about fifty miles off the southern coast of Cuba, in the year 1665.

"This is evidently what your father meant by your fortune, Flossie," said George. "He obtained this bit of parchment from some person who was unable to make use of its secret himself. Strange that your father made no effort to hunt for the treasure, either. It is clear that Jim Redmond in some way found out about this thing and laid his plans to get hold of the doubloons after your father died. To that end he stole the pocketbook before the expected arrival of your uncle should thwart his purpose. Only that I fortunately happened to look through the lighthouse window that night he would have been able to have carried out his design. Well, dear, some day we'll go on a little trip to the Isle of Pines and see whether we can unearth those Spanish coins."

It was two years before the opportunity came for them to carry out this plan.

Stanton had just been elected to the New York Legislature, and he concluded to take a winter vacation.

So he and Flossie made up a little party for a Caribbean trip, a rich friend having loaned Stanton his schooner-yacht.

The barrel of coin was discovered in the spot described in the parchment, and Flossie suddenly found herself worth \$20,000—quite a little fortune in its way.

Once in politics, Stanton became more popular than ever.

His name was now frequently mentioned in the newspapers and always to his advantage.

Two years later he was elected a State Senator by a very large majority from the Harlem Senatorial district in which he lived.

He has since been re-elected three times, and may be said to carry his district in his vest pocket, so solid is he in that quarter.

Still his ambition is but partially satisfied, for he hopes some day to represent New York State in the Upper House of Congress, and we have no doubt but he will get there in time, since he is a man who knows no such a word as "fail."

In fact, there is no telling but he may reach the Presidency before he dies, thus attaining the very pinnacle of "The Ladder of Fame."

THE END.

Read "ON THE SQUARE; OR, THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY," which will be the next number (51) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

SPECIAL NOTICE: All back numbers of this weekly are always in print. If you cannot obtain them from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 24 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.

WILD WEST WEEKLY

A Magazine Containing Stories, Sketches, etc., of Western Life.

BY AN OLD SCOUT.

32 PAGES

PRICE 5 CENTS.

32 PAGES.

EACH NUMBER IN A HANDSOME COLORED COVER.

All of these exciting stories are founded on facts. Young Wild West is a hero with whom the author was acquainted. His daring deeds and thrilling adventures have never been surpassed. They form the base of the most dashing stories ever published. Read the following numbers of this most interesting magazine and be convinced:

LATEST ISSUES:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 146 Young Wild West's Lively Time; or, The Dandy Duck of the Diggings. | 176 Young Wild West and the Magic Mine; or, How Arietta Solved a Mystery. |
| 147 Young Wild West at Hold-Up Canyon; or, Arietta's Great Victory. | 177 Young Wild West as a Cavalry Scout; or, Saving the Settlers. |
| 148 Young Wild West's Square Deal; or, Making the "Bad" Men Good. | 178 Young Wild West Beating the Bandits; or, Arietta's Best Shot. |
| 149 Young Wild West Cowing the Cowboys; or, Arietta and the Prairie Fire. | 179 Young Wild West and "Crazy Hawk"; or, The Redskins' Last Raid. |
| 150 Young Wild West and Navajo Ned; or, The Hunt for the Half-Breed Hermit. | 180 Young Wild West Chasing the Cowboys; or, Arietta the Lariat Queen. |
| 151 Young Wild West's Virgin Vein; or, Arietta and the Cave-in. | 181 Young Wild West and the Treacherous Trapper; or, Lost in the Great North Woods. |
| 152 Young Wild West's Cowboy Champions; or, The Trip to Kansas City. | 182 Young Wild West's Dash to Deadwood; or, Arietta and the Kidnappers. |
| 153 Young Wild West's Even Chance; or, Arietta's Presence of Mind. | 183 Young Wild West's Silver Scoop; or, Cleaning Up a Hundred Thousand. |
| 154 Young Wild West and the Flattened Bullet; or, The Man Who Would not Drop. | 184 Young Wild West and the Oregon Outlaws; or, Arietta as a "Judge." |
| 155 Young Wild West's Gold Game; or, Arietta's Full Hand. | 185 Young Wild West and "Mexican Matt"; or, Routing the Rawhide Rangers. |
| 156 Young Wild West's Cowboy Scrimmage; or, Cooking a Crowd of Crooks. | 186 Young Wild West and the Comanche Queen; or, Arietta as an Archer. |
| 157 Young Wild West and the Arizona Athlete; or, The Duel that Lasted a Week. | 187 Young Wild West and the "Gold Ring"; or, The Flashy Five of Four Flush. |
| 158 Young Wild West and the Kansas Cowboys; or, Arietta's Clean Score. | 188 Young Wild West's Double Rescue; or, Arietta's Race With Death. |
| 159 Young Wild West Doubling His Luck; or, The Mine that Made a Million. | 189 Young Wild West and the Texas Rangers; or, Crooked Work on the Rio Grande. |
| 160 Young Wild West and the Loop of Death; or, Arietta's Gold Cache. | 190 Young Wild West's Branding Bee; or, Arietta and the Cow Punchers. |
| 161 Young Wild West at Boiling Butte; or, Hop Wah and the High-binders. | 191 Young Wild West and His Partner's Pile, and How Arietta Saved It. |
| 162 Young Wild West Paying the Pawnees; or, Arietta Held for Ransom. | 193 Young Wild West's Buckhorn Bowtie, and How It Saved His Partners. |
| 163 Young Wild West's Shooting Match; or, The "Show-Down" at Shasta. | 194 Young Wild West in the Haunted Hills; or, Arietta and the Aztec Arrow. |
| 164 Young Wild West at Death Divide; or, Arietta's Great Fight. | 195 Young Wild West's Cowboy Dance; or, Arietta's Annoying Admirer. |
| 165 Young Wild West and the Scarlet Seven; or, Arietta's Darling Leap. | 196 Young Wild West's Double Shot; or, Cheyenne Charlie's Life Line. |
| 166 Young Wild West's Mirror Shot; or, Rattling the Renegades. | 197 Young Wild West at Gold Gorge; or, Arietta and the Drop of Death. |
| 167 Young Wild West and the Greaser Gang; or, Arietta as a Spy. | 198 Young Wild West and the Gulf Gang; or, Arietta's Three Shots. |
| 168 Young Wild West losing a Million; or, How Arietta Helped Him Out. | 199 Young Wild West's Treasure Trove; or, The Wonderful Luck of the Girls. |
| 169 Young Wild West and the Railroad Robbers; or, Lively Work in Utah. | 200 Young Wild West's Leap in the Dark; or, Arietta and the Underground Stream. |
| 170 Young Wild West Corraling the Cow-Punchers; or, Arietta's Swim for Life. | 201 Young Wild West and the Silver Queen; or, The Fate of the Mystic Ten. |
| 171 Young Wild West "Facing the Music"; or, The Mistake the Lynchers Made. | 202 Young Wild West Striking it Rich; or, Arietta and the Cave of Gold. |
| 172 Young Wild West and "Montana Mose"; or, Arietta's Messenger of Death. | 203 Young Wild West's Relay Race; or, The Fight at Fort Feather. |
| 173 Young Wild West at Grizzly Gulch; or, The Shot that Saved the Camp. | 204 Young Wild West and the "Crooked Cowboys"; or, Arietta and the Cattle Stampede. |
| 174 Young Wild West on the Warpath; or, Arietta Among the Apaches. | 205 Young Wild West at Sizzling Fork; or, A Hot Time with the Claim Jumpers. |
| 175 Young Wild West and "Nebraska Nick"; or, The Cattle Thieves of the Platte. | 206 Young Wild West and Big "Buffalo"; or, Arietta at the Stake. |
| | 207 Young Wild West Raiding the Raiders; or, The Vengeance of the Vigilants. |
| | 208 Young Wild West's Royal Flush; or, Arietta and the Gamblers. |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,

24 Union Square, New York

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Libraries and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

.....190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

- | | |
|--|-------|
|copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos..... | |
| " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos..... | |
| " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos..... | |
| " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos..... | |
| " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos..... | |
| " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos..... | |
| " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos..... | |
| " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos..... | |

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....

These Books Tell You Everything!

A COMPLETE SET IS A REGULAR ENCYCLOPEDIA!

Each book consists of sixty-four pages, printed on good paper, in clear type and neatly bound in an attractive, illustrated cover. Most of the books are also profusely illustrated, and all of the subjects treated upon are explained in such a simple manner that any child can thoroughly understand them. Look over the list as classified and see if you want to know anything about the subjects mentioned.

THESE BOOKS ARE FOR SALE BY ALL NEWSDEALERS OR WILL BE SENT BY MAIL TO ANY ADDRESS FROM THIS OFFICE ON RECEIPT OF PRICE, TEN CENTS EACH, OR ANY THREE BOOKS FOR TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY. Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, N.Y.

MESMERISM.

No. 81. HOW TO MESMERIZE.—Containing the most approved methods of mesmerism; also how to cure all kinds of diseases by animal magnetism, or, magnetic healing. By Prof. Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S., author of "How to Hypnotize," etc.

PALMISTRY.

No. 82. HOW TO DO PALMISTRY.—Containing the most approved methods of reading the lines on the hand, together with a full explanation of their meaning. Also explaining phrenology, and the key for telling character by the bumps on the head. By Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S. Fully illustrated.

HYPNOTISM.

No. 83. HOW TO HYPNOTIZE.—Containing valuable and instructive information regarding the science of hypnotism. Also explaining the most approved methods which are employed by the leading hypnotists of the world. By Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S.

SPORTING.

No. 21. HOW TO HUNT AND FISH.—The most complete hunting and fishing guide ever published. It contains full instructions about guns, hunting dogs, traps, trapping and fishing, together with descriptions of game and fish.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Every boy should know how to row and sail a boat. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 47. HOW TO BREAK, RIDE AND DRIVE A HORSE.—A complete treatise on the horse. Describing the most useful horses for business, the best horses for the road; also valuable recipes for diseases peculiar to the horse.

No. 48. HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated. By C. Stansfield Hicks.

FORTUNE TELLING.

No. 1. NAPOLEON'S ORACULUM AND DREAM BOOK.—Containing the great oracle of human destiny; also the true meaning of almost any kind of dreams, together with charms, ceremonies, and curious games of cards. A complete book.

No. 23. HOW TO EXPLAIN DREAMS.—Everybody dreams, from the little child to the aged man and woman. This little book gives the explanation to all kinds of dreams, together with lucky and unlucky days, and "Napoleon's Oraculum," the book of fate.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Everyone is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book. Buy one and be convinced. Tell your own fortune. Tell the fortune of your friends.

No. 76. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES BY THE HAND.—Containing rules for telling fortunes by the aid of lines of the hand, or the secret of palmistry. Also the secret of telling future events by aid of moles, marks, scars, etc. Illustrated. By A. Anderson.

ATHLETIC.

No. 6. HOW TO BECOME AN ATHLETE.—Giving full instruction for the use of dumb bells, Indian clubs, parallel bars, horizontal bars and various other methods of developing a good, healthy muscle; containing over sixty illustrations. Every boy can become strong and healthy by following the instructions contained in this little book.

No. 10. HOW TO BOX.—The art of self-defense made easy. Containing over thirty illustrations of guards, blows, and the different positions of a good boxer. Every boy should obtain one of these useful and instructive books, as it will teach you how to box without an instructor.

No. 25. HOW TO BECOME A GYMNAST.—Containing full instructions for all kinds of gymnastic sports and athletic exercises. Embracing thirty-five illustrations. By Professor W. Macdonald. A handy and useful book.

No. 34. HOW TO FENCE.—Containing full instruction for fencing and the use of the broadsword; also instruction in archery. Described with twenty-one practical illustrations, giving the best positions in fencing. A complete book.

TRICKS WITH CARDS.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. By Professor Haffner. Illustrated.

No. 72. HOW TO DO SIXTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Embracing all of the latest and most deceptive card tricks, with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 77. HOW TO DO FORTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing deceptive Card Tricks as performed by leading conjurors and magicians. Arranged for home amusement. Fully illustrated.

MAGIC.

No. 2. HOW TO DO TRICKS.—The great book of magic and card tricks, containing full instruction on all the leading card tricks of the day, also the most popular magical illusions as performed by our leading magicians; every boy should obtain a copy of this book, as it will both amuse and instruct.

No. 22. HOW TO DO SECOND SIGHT.—Heller's second sight explained by his former assistant, Fred Hunt, Jr. Explaining how the secret dialogues were carried on between the magician and the boy on the stage; also giving all the codes and signals. The only authentic explanation of second sight.

No. 43. HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN.—Containing the grandest assortment of magical illusions ever placed before the public. Also tricks with cards, incantations, etc.

No. 68. HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 69. HOW TO DO SLEIGHT OF HAND.—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

No. 70. HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.—Containing full directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 73. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH NUMBERS.—Showing many curious tricks with figures and the magic of numbers. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 75. HOW TO BECOME A CONJUROR.—Containing tricks with Dominos, Dice, Cups and Balls, Hats, etc. Embracing thirty-six illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 78. HOW TO DO THE BLACK ART.—Containing a complete description of the mysteries of Magic and Sleight of Hand, together with many wonderful experiments. By A. Anderson. Illustrated.

MECHANICAL.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc. The most instructive book published.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to proceed in order to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

No. 57. HOW TO MAKE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.—Full directions how to make a Banjo, Violin, Zither, Æolian Harp, Xylophone and other musical instruments; together with a brief description of nearly every musical instrument used in ancient or modern times. Profusely illustrated. By Algernon S. Fitzgerald, for twenty years bandmaster of the Royal Bengal Marines.

No. 59. HOW TO MAKE A MAGIC LANTERN.—Containing a description of the lantern, together with its history and invention. Also full directions for its use and for painting slides. Handsomely illustrated. By John Allen.

No. 71. HOW TO DO MECHANICAL TRICKS.—Containing complete instructions for performing over sixty Mechanical Tricks. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

LETTER WRITING.

No. 11. HOW TO WRITE LOVE-LETTERS.—A most complete little book, containing full directions for writing love-letters, and when to use them, giving specimen letters for young and old.

No. 12. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO LADIES.—Giving complete instructions for writing letters to ladies on all subjects; also letters of introduction, notes and requests.

No. 24. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO GENTLEMEN.—Containing full directions for writing to gentlemen on all subjects; also giving sample letters for instruction.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to. Every young man and every young lady in the land should have this book.

No. 74. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS CORRECTLY.—Containing full instructions for writing letters on almost any subject; also rules for punctuation and composition, with specimen letters.

THE STAGE.

No. 41. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.—Containing a varied assortment of stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes. Just the thing for home amusement and amateur shows.

No. 45. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 65. MULDOON'S JOKES.—This is one of the most original joke books ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist, and practical joker of the day. Every boy who can enjoy a good substantial joke should obtain a copy immediately.

No. 79. HOW TO BECOME AN ACTOR.—Containing complete instructions how to make up for various characters on the stage; together with the duties of the Stage Manager, Prompter, Scenic Artist and Property Man. By a prominent Stage Manager.

No. 80. GUS WILLIAMS' JOKE BOOK.—Containing the latest jokes, anecdotes and funny stories of this world-renowned and ever popular German comedian. Sixty-four pages; handsome colored cover containing a half-tone photo of the author.

HOUSEKEEPING.

No. 16. HOW TO KEEP A WINDOW GARDEN.—Containing full instructions for constructing a window garden either in town or country, and the most approved methods for raising beautiful flowers at home. The most complete book of the kind ever published.

No. 30. HOW TO COOK.—One of the most instructive books on cooking ever published. It contains recipes for cooking meats, fish, game, and oysters; also pies, puddings, cakes and all kinds of pastry, and a grand collection of recipes by one of our most popular cooks.

No. 37. HOW TO KEEP HOUSE.—It contains information for everybody, boys, girls, men and women; it will teach you how to make almost anything around the house, such as parlor ornaments, brackets, cements, Aeolian harps, and bird lime for catching birds.

ELECTRICAL.

No. 46. HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trebel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

No. 64. HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos, and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By R. A. R. Bennett. Fully illustrated.

No. 67. HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

ENTERTAINMENT.

No. 9. HOW TO BECOME A VENTRILOQUIST.—By Harry Kennedy. The secret given away. Every intelligent boy reading this book of instructions, by a practical professor (delighting multitudes every night with his wonderful imitations), can master the art, and create any amount of fun for himself and friends. It is the greatest book ever published, and there's millions (of fun) in it.

No. 20. HOW TO ENTERTAIN AN EVENING PARTY.—A very valuable little book just published. A complete compendium of games, sports, card diversions, comic recitations, etc., suitable for parlor or drawing-room entertainment. It contains more for the money than any book published.

No. 35. HOW TO PLAY GAMES.—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, backgammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 52. HOW TO PLAY CARDS.—A complete and handy little book, giving the rules and full directions for playing Euchre, Cribbage, Casino, Forty-Five, Rummy, Pedro Sancho, Draw Poker, Auction Pitch, All Fours, and many other popular games of cards.

No. 66. HOW TO DO PUZZLES.—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

ETIQUETTE.

No. 13. HOW TO DO IT; OR, BOOK OF ETIQUETTE.—It is a great life secret, and one that every young man desires to know all about. There's happiness in it.

No. 33. HOW TO BEHAVE.—Containing the rules and etiquette of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

DECLAMATION.

No. 27. HOW TO RECITE AND BOOK OF RECITATIONS.—Containing the most popular selections in use, comprising Dutch dialect, French dialect, Yankee and Irish dialect pieces, together with many standard readings.

No. 31. HOW TO BECOME A SPEAKER.—Containing fourteen illustrations, giving the different positions requisite to become a good speaker, reader and elocutionist. Also containing gems from all the popular authors of prose and poetry, arranged in the most simple and concise manner possible.

No. 49. HOW TO DEBATE.—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debater, questions for discussion, and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.

SOCIETY.

No. 3. HOW TO FLIRT.—The arts and wiles of flirtation are fully explained by this little book. Besides the various methods of handkerchief, fan, glove, parasol, window and hat flirtation, it contains a full list of the language and sentiment of flowers, which is interesting to everybody, both old and young. You cannot be happy without one.

No. 4. HOW TO DANCE is the title of a new and handsome little book just issued by Frank Tousey. It contains full instructions in the art of dancing, etiquette in the ball-room and at parties, how to dress, and full directions for calling off in all popular square dances.

No. 5. HOW TO MAKE LOVE.—A complete guide to love, courtship and marriage, giving sensible advice, rules and etiquette to be observed, with many curious and interesting things not generally known.

No. 17. HOW TO DRESS.—Containing full instruction in the art of dressing and appearing well at home and abroad, giving the selections of colors, material, and how to have them made up.

No. 18. HOW TO BECOME BEAUTIFUL.—One of the brightest and most valuable little books ever given to the world. Everybody wishes to know how to become beautiful, both male and female. The secret is simple, and almost costless. Read this book and be convinced how to become beautiful.

BIRDS AND ANIMALS.

No. 7. HOW TO KEEP BIRDS.—Handsomely illustrated and containing full instructions for the management and training of the canary, mockingbird, bobolink, blackbird, paroquet, parrot, etc.

No. 39. HOW TO RAISE DOGS, POULTRY, PIGEONS AND RABBITS.—A useful and instructive book. Handsomely illustrated. By Ira Drowar.

No. 40. HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated. By J. Harrington Keene.

No. 50. HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 54. HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations, making it the most complete book of the kind ever published.

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 8. HOW TO BECOME A SCIENTIST.—A useful and instructive book, giving a complete treatise on chemistry; also experiments in acoustics, mechanics, mathematics, chemistry, and directions for making fireworks, colored fires, and gas balloons. This book cannot be equaled.

No. 14. HOW TO MAKE CANDY.—A complete hand-book for making all kinds of candy, ice-cream, syrups, essences, etc., etc.

No. 84. HOW TO BECOME AN AUTHOR.—Containing full information regarding choice of subjects, the use of words and the manner of preparing and submitting manuscript. Also containing valuable information as to the neatness, legibility and general composition of manuscript, essential to a successful author. By Prince Hiland.

No. 38. HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN DOCTOR.—A wonderful book, containing useful and practical information in the treatment of ordinary diseases and ailments common to every family. Abounding in useful and effective recipes for general complaints.

No. 55. HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 58. HOW TO BE A DETECTIVE.—By Old King Brady, the world-known detective. In which he lays down some valuable and sensible rules for beginners, and also relates some adventures and experiences of well-known detectives.

No. 60. HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated. By Captain W. De W. Abney.

No. 62. HOW TO BECOME A WEST POINT MILITARY CADET.—Containing full explanations how to gain admittance, course of Study, Examinations, Duties, Staff of Officers, Post Guard, Police Regulations, Fire Department, and all a boy should know to be a Cadet. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a Naval Cadet."

No. 63. HOW TO BECOME A NAVAL CADET.—Complete instructions of how to gain admission to the Annapolis Naval Academy. Also containing the course of instruction, description of grounds and buildings, historical sketch, and everything a boy should know to become an officer in the United States Navy. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a West Point Military Cadet."

PRICE 10 CENTS EACH, OR 3 FOR 25 CENTS.

Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY

A COMPLETE STORY EVERY WEEK

Price 5 Cents

BY THE BEST AUTHORS

Price 5 Cents

HANDSOME ILLUSTRATED COVERS

32-PAGES OF READING MATTER

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

Interesting Stories of Adventure in All Parts of the World

TAKE NOTICE!

This handsome weekly contains intensely interesting stories of adventure on a great variety of subjects. Each number is replete with rousing situations and lively incidents. The heroes are bright, manly fellows, who overcome all obstacles by sheer force of brains and grit and win well-merited success. We have secured a staff of new authors, who write these stories in a manner which will be a source of pleasure and profit to the reader. Each number has a handsome colored illustration made by the most expert artists. Large sums of money are being spent to make this one of the best weeklies ever published.

.....Here is a List of Some of the Titles.....

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Smashing the Auto Record; or, Bart Wilson at the Speed Lever. By Edward N. Fox. | 13 The Great Gaul "Beat"; or, Phil Winston's Start in Reporting. By A. Howard De Witt. |
| 2 Off the Ticker; or, Fate at a Moment's Notice. By Tom Dawson. | 14 Out for Gold; or, The Boy Who Knew the Difference. By Tom Dawson. |
| 3 From Cadet to Captain; or, Dick Danford's West Point Nerve. By Lieut. J. J. Barry. | 15 The Boy Who Balked; or, Bob Brisbane's Big Kick. By Frank Irving. |
| 4 The Get-There Boys; or, Making Things Hum in Honduras. By Fred Warburton. | 16 Slicker than Silk; or, The Smoothest Boy Alive. By Rob Roy. |
| 5 Written in Cipher; or, The Skein Jack Barry Unravalled. By Prof. Oliver Owens. | 17 The Keg of Diamonds; or, After the Treasure of the Caliphs. By Tom Dawson. |
| 6 The No-Good Boys; or, Downing a Tough Name. By A. Howard De Witt. | 18 Sandow, Junior; or, The Boy Who Looked Puny. By Prof. Oliver Owens. |
| 7 Kicked off the Earth; or, Ted Trim's Hard Luck Cure. By Rob Roy. | 19 Won by Bluff; or, Jack Mason's Marble Face. By Frank Irving. |
| 8 Doing it Quick; or, Ike Brown's Hustle at Panama. By Captain Hawthorn, U. S. N. | 20 On the Lobster Shift; or, The Herald's Star Reporter. By A. Howard De Witt. |
| 9 In the 'Frisco Earthquake; or, Bob Brag's Day of Terror. By Prof. Oliver Owens. | 21 Under the Vendetta's Steel; or, A Yankee Boy in Corsica. By Lieut. J. J. Barry. |
| 10 We, Us & Co.; or, Seeing Life with a Vaudeville Show. By Edward N. Fox. | 22 Too Green to Burn; or, The Luck of Being a Boy. By Rob Roy. |
| 11 Cut Out for an Officer; or, Corporal Ted in the Philippines. By Lieut. J. J. Barry. | |
| 12 A Fool for Luck; or, The Boy Who Turned Boss. By Fred Warburton. | |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,

24 Union Square, New York.

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our libraries, and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.

POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find..... cents for which please send me:

....copies of FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

32 Pages of Reading Matter

: :

Handsome Colored Covers

A NEW ONE ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

PRICE 5 CENTS A COPY

This Weekly contains interesting stories of smart boys, who win fame and fortune by their ability to take advantage of passing opportunities. Some of these stories are founded on true incidents in the lives of our most successful self-made men, and show how a boy of pluck, perseverance and brains can become famous and wealthy. Every one of this series contains a good moral tone which makes "Fame and Fortune Weekly" a magazine for the home, although each number is replete with exciting adventures. The stories are the very best obtainable, the illustrations are by expert artists, and every effort is constantly being made to make it the best weekly on the news stands. Tell your friends about it.

ALREADY PUBLISHED.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 A Lucky Deal; or, The Cutest Boy in Wall Street. | 29 A Sure Winner; or, The Boy Who Went Out With a Circus. |
| 2 Born to Good Luck; or, The Boy Who Succeeded. | 30 Golden Fleece; or, The Boy Brokers of Wall Street. |
| 3 A Corner in Corn; or, How a Chicago Boy Did the Trick. | 31 A Mad Cap Scheme; or, The Boy Treasure Hunters of Cocos Island. |
| 4 A Game of Chance; or, The Boy Who Won Out. | 32 Adrift on the World; or, Working His Way to Fortune. |
| 5 Hard to Beat; or, The Cleverest Boy in Wall Street. | 33 Playing to Win; or, The Foxiest Boy in Wall Street. |
| 6 Building a Railroad; or, The Young Contractors of Lakeview. | 34 Tatfers; or, A Boy from the Slums. |
| 7 Winning His Way; or, The Youngest Editor in Green River. | 35 A Young Monte Cristo; or, The Richest Boy in the World. |
| 8 The Wheel of Fortune; or, The Record of a Self-Made Boy. | 36 Won by Pluck; or, The Boys Who Ran a Railroad. |
| 9 Nip and Tuck; or, The Young Brokers of Wall Street. | 37 Beating the Brokers; or, The Boy Who "Couldn't be Done." |
| 10 A Copper Harvest; or, The Boys Who Worked a Deserted Mine. | 38 A Rolling Stone; or, The Brightest Boy on Record. |
| 11 A Lucky Penny; or, The Fortunes of a Boston Boy. | 39 Never Say Die; or, The Young Surveyor of Happy Valley. |
| 12 A Diamond in the Rough; or, A Brave Boy's Start in Life. | 40 Almost a Man; or, Winning His Way to the Top. |
| 13 Baiting the Bears; or, The Nerviest Boy in Wall Street. | 41 Boss of the Market; or, The Greatest Boy in Wall Street. |
| 14 A Gold Brick; or, The Boy Who Could Not be Downed. | 42 The Chance of His Life; or, The Young Pilot of Crystal Lake. |
| 15 A Streak of Luck; or, The Boy Who Feathered His Nest. | 43 Striving for Fortune; or, From Bell-Boy to Millionaire. |
| 16 A Good Thing; or, The Boy Who Made a Fortune. | 44 Out for Business; or, The Smartest Boy in Town. |
| 17 King of the Market; or, The Young Trader in Wall Street. | 45 A Favorite of Fortune; or, Striking It Rich in Wall Street. |
| 18 Pure Grit; or, One Boy in a Thousand. | 46 Through Thick and Thin; or, The Adventures of a Smart Boy. |
| 19 A Rise in Life; or, The Career of a Factory Poy. | 47 Doing His Level Best; or, Working His Way Up. |
| 20 A Barrel of Money; or, A Bright Boy in Wall Street. | 48 Always on Deck; or, The Boy Who Made His Mark. |
| 21 All to the Good; or, From Call Boy to Manager. | 49 A Mint of Money; or, The Young Wall Street Broker. |
| 22 How He Got There; or, The Pluckiest Boy of Them All. | 50 The Ladder of Fame; or, From Office Boy to Senator. |
| 23 Bound to Win; or, The Boy Who Got Rich. | |
| 24 Pushing It Through; or, The Fate of a Lucky Boy. | |
| 25 A Born Speculator; or, The Young Sphinx of Wall Street. | |
| 26 The Way to Success; or, The Boy Who Got There. | |
| 27 Struck Oil; or, The Boy Who Made a Million. | |
| 28 A Golden Risk; or, The Young Miners of Della Cruz. | |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,

24 Union Square, New York.

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Libraries and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.

POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

-copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
- " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
- " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
- " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
- " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
- " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
- " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
- " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....